Have Community Policing Initiatives Changed Police Perceptions of Accountability in Macquarie Fields and have they led to Better Police-Community Relations?

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ABSTRACT

In February 2005, riots involving local youth against police erupted in Macquarie Fields following the deaths of two local young men who were in a stolen vehicle being pursued by police. The riots at the time were dismissed by the serving Government, the Opposition, NSW Police management and sections of the media, as merely a handful of young thugs behaving poorly. However, subsequent media coverage, political debate recorded in Hansard, academic literature and the findings of the Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006) revealed discontent amongst some residents concerning the behavior, attitudes and inconsistent actions of Macquarie Fields police. This study, through interviews conducted with government and non-government service providers servicing the Macquarie Fields community and interviews/observations conducted with Macquarie Fields police participants, examined perceptions held by Macquarie Fields police concerning their accountability and partnership with the community. It sought to discover whether police-community programs implemented following the 2005 riots impacted upon police perceptions of accountability to the community and led to improved relations between police and community.

Findings indicated that despite the attempts of Government and police management to improve relations between Macquarie Fields police and community, the relationship remained problematic. Police participants were found to hold variable notions of accountability and partnership towards the community. This combined negatively with the primary crime reduction strategy of ‘stopping searching and moving on’ local youth socializing in public places, which was reported by community service respondents as being conducted by younger inexperienced police in an adversarial manner.

Findings from this study also indicated that poor police attitudes towards the community were influenced by a problematic work environment in which police predominantly came into contact with a small percentage of the community, namely youths from the Department of Housing estates. Many of these interactions consisted of police being subjected to verbal and sometimes physical abuse. Furthermore, police considered they
were not respected, unappreciated and being used by these community members. These constant adversarial interactions have led to police negatively stereotyping other members of the Macquarie Fields community. In addition, police participants saw themselves different to the local community members with whom they came in contact. Police regarded these residents as ‘others’ and perceived vast dissimilarities between themselves and the residents in terms of: ambition; care of children; morals and values; drug usage; education; employment; hygiene; motivation and respect for authority and family. This impacted negatively upon the manner in which police interacted with community members.

Findings from this study are significant in light of the commitment of Australian police organisations to be more accountable to local communities through the implementation of community policing initiatives. The adverse impact of the socially disorganised Macquarie Fields community upon police perceptions of accountability to the community and subsequent fluctuation of service may be of relevance to the policing of other Australian disorganised communities where tensions exist between communities and police.

In terms of police policy and practice, this study recommends that police management at Macquarie Fields need to recognise the adverse impact of the socially disorganised Macquarie Fields community upon police attitudes. Furthermore, strategies need to be undertaken by management to address this issue. These include; addressing the ‘crime fighting’ mindset through the encouragement of a service-oriented approach; experienced police being paired with inexperienced officers; additional deployment of female officers; a greater emphasis placed upon problem oriented policing strategies. Also, the education of police plays a pivotal role in assisting to combat the adverse impact of social disorganisation upon police attitudes and behavior. Education, involving social difference; effective communication with young people; community policing; de-escalation and conflict management techniques; and an awareness of the negative impact of certain police defensive tactics, may assist police in their role and help alleviate the strained police-community relationship at Macquarie Fields.
CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP/ORIGINALITY

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by any person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

Signature of Candidate

________________________
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GLOSSARY

‘COP’ Community Oriented Policing

‘Housos’ Department of Housing residents

‘Person of Interest’ Suspect in a criminal matter

‘Scheduling’ A person suffering from a mental disorder which places them at risk of harm to themselves or others being admitted to hospital by police.

‘Trog Juice’ Antiseptic gel applied by police to their hands following physical contact with Department of Housing residents.
**ABBREVIATIONS**

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<td>CMT</td>
<td>Conflict Management Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSWP</td>
<td>New South Wales Police</td>
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<tr>
<td>PARC/VERA</td>
<td>Police Assessment Resource Centre and Vera Institute of Justice</td>
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<tr>
<td>POP</td>
<td>Problem Oriented Policing</td>
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<td>RBT</td>
<td>Random Breath Test</td>
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Introduction

On the 25 February 2005, just after 11:00 pm, police from strike force Delage, a task force formed to investigate a number of individuals suspected of committing aggravated break enter and steal offences, pursued a stolen vehicle in Eucalyptus Drive, Macquarie Fields, situated in western Sydney. Forty seconds later, at 11.01pm, the vehicle being pursued collided with a tree. Two young men, Dylan Raymond, 17, and Matthew Robertson, 19, from Glennquarrie Estate, a socially disadvantaged public housing estate within Macquarie Fields died while the driver, Jesse Kelly, escaped from the scene.

Shortly after, the accident site was declared a crime scene by police. A crowd of onlookers had begun to form and at approximately 12.20am on the 26 February, an individual from the crowd was arrested by police as he attempted to gain access to the crime scene. At 1am police made another arrest as another young male also attempted to gain access to the crime scene. The Standing Committee on Social Issues which was formed by the New South Wales State Government to examine the causation of the riots reported that, “During the early morning of 26 February, as specialist police attempted to investigate the accident, a group of between 50 and 60 onlookers became increasingly violent and began to throw concrete blocks and bottles at police.” (Standing Committee on Social Issues, 2006, p.3). In addition, the New South Wales Police (NSWP) (2005, p.69) reported that a total of 21 police officers sustained injuries during the riot, 15 of whom had been hit with projectiles thrown by the rioters.
Watson and Sun (2005) for The Daily Telegraph reported:

The bill for the Macquarie Fields riots is likely to cost taxpayers up to $1 million. The police response on the ground alone has already cost almost $300,000, based on 100 police officers patrolling the streets for two weeks, according to Opposition figures. Helicopter coverage cost an additional $560,000, based on a $40,000 daily rate. Mounted police were estimated to cost more than $31,000 during the four-day riots and dog squads $15,000 for the two weeks (Watson & Sun, 2005).

The initial incident and the ensuing riots attracted considerable media coverage, which touched upon underlying social issues as possible contributing factors leading to the civil unrest. Evidence was to emerge from some local residents regarding their dissatisfaction with the attitudes and conduct of local police. For instance, Squires (2005) from the New Zealand Herald reported the following views of some of the local residents:

“The way the police treat people around here is disgusting”, Colin Reck, 53, a disability beneficiary, said “They assume that everyone is a druggie and whenever there’s trouble they go in, boots ‘n’ all. It’s an us-and-them mentality.” A 32 –year-old Uruguayan- born woman, who asked not to be named, said: “I saw one of the dead boys’ friends approach the wrecked car, but he was pushed to the ground by two police officers and punched in the face. There’s going to be a scar on the minds of these kids forever. People around here are very, very angry.” (Squires, 2005)

The Sydney Morning Herald published the views of a fifteen year old youth who stated, “We’ve got nothing to do here, so the cops harass us, they pull up at four
o’clock in the morning and play the song Bad Boys really loud and put their sirens on. We want revenge” (Jopson, Davies & Norrie, 2005). In addition, Sydney Morning Herald columnists, Totaro and Connolly (2005) described the opinions of another resident who stated, “What’s there to do here, man. Whatever you do the cops come after you. You walk down the street you get harassed by the coppers – Steve Cook, 19.”

Residents’ accounts, as reported in sections of the media concerning poor police interactions, were not the only source of documented community dissatisfaction. Hansard (2005) recorded the comments of a New South Wales Member of Parliament, Sylvia Hale from the Greens Party whom during question time stated:

…and while the Premier and the Opposition Leader have fallen over themselves to praise the police, the Greens have heard the voices of some of the young people in the area who confirm that the riots are the culmination of ongoing harassment and bullying by the police in this area… The Greens know that the riots in Macquarie Fields, like the riots in Redfern last year, are not about a single incident involving the police or about the morality of the people who live in those areas. They are about the historically poor way in which the communities have been treated and serviced and more specifically about the ongoing tensions between the police and youth of the area. The Premier and the Leader of the Opposition should be ashamed of their responses to these matters (Hansard, pp.14596-14597.)

This theme of historical tension between Macquarie Fields residents and local police was also touched upon by Lee (2006) an academic, who at the time was employed by the University of Western Sydney. His qualitative research conducted during 2002 to
2003 explored local residents’ views concerning, “community, disorder and crime” (Lee, 2006, p.33). The study involved twenty one participants consisting of fourteen residents, four service providers and three local police. Lee’s research discovered that participants were confused concerning the way in which police dealt with members of the community. For instance, participants articulated inconsistencies concerning police interactions with local residents. Lee (2006) reported, “Respondents repeatedly reported the problem of police inaction to incidents on the one hand, and an over-reaction to other incidents” (Lee, 2006, p.44). Lee also found that even though Macquarie Fields Police had implemented a number of community policing initiatives, residents did not feel part of the community policing process.

As well as these aforementioned sources which indicate resident discontent with the behaviour and conduct of local police, during 2005-2006 the New South Wales Parliament Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues conducted an inquiry into the riots. This enquiry was tasked with six terms of reference two of which were to examine:

1. Policing strategies and resources in the Macquarie Fields area, particularly in the immediate period leading up to and following the motor vehicle accident involving two fatalities on 25 February 2005.

5. The underlying causes and problems which may have contributed to individual and collective acts of violence and social disorder (Standing Committee on Social issues, 2006, p.iv).

In June 2006 the Standing Committee on Social Issues released its final report into the 2005 riots. The final report provided evidence concerning the poor relationship
between local residents and police leading up to the riots. For example, a submission from Uniting Care Burnside stated, “…residents perceive that police have neglected their community, that policing in the area is erratic and aggressive and that there is an unwillingness to respond to call-outs” (Submission 18, Uniting Care Burnside 2006, p.13). In addition, evidence deposed to the Standing Committee on Social Issues by local youth indicated:

Many of the young people felt that they were constantly being harassed by the police, that they were not being given a chance, were frequently asked to move on when they are congregating with friends – the example was provided of a football game where a large group was asked to move on – and are often provoked by the police into acting inappropriately (Confidential evidence, youth forum, 13 December 2005, p.46).

Further evidence indicated:

There was also a sense within the community that when they were presenting at the police station they were not treated with the respect that they felt they deserved, and that their concerns were not taken seriously. I think there was a sense of being discounted. So the relationship prior to the disturbances was not a healthy one. It had not been healthy for quite a while” (Ms Jan Watson, Facilitator, Schools as Community Centres, Evidence 7 April 2006, p.74).

The above pre-amble illustrates through various sources the experiences and opinions of some residents from Macquarie Fields, which highlights their dissatisfaction concerning the actions and inactions of police. In addition to their observations and
experiences it is also instructive to note that senior police management also observed strained relations between the local police and the Macquarie Fields community around the time of the 2005 riots. Superintendent Wilkins, who was appointed as the Local Area Commander of Macquarie Fields following the riots was reported by Totaro (2006) from the Sydney Morning Herald as stating “When I first got here, I picked up straight away the negativity between the police and the community. The police were alienated from the people they served – when you’ve had Molotov cocktails and get insults hurled at you every day it wears you down”.

These aforementioned concerns raise some questions. Do police officers serving the socially disadvantaged community of Macquarie Fields behave in a poor manner when dealing with members of the local community? Does such behaviour reflect a lack of perceived accountability to the local community? What would influence police to behave in such a manner? Have organisational structures such as community policing initiatives implemented since the 2005 riots changed police perceptions of accountability to the community and subsequent police-community relations?

**Research aim**

This thesis is an examination of the perceptions of accountability to the community held by police performing duties at the Macquarie Fields Patrol. Its aim is to examine whether community-policing initiatives implemented since the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots have changed police perceptions of accountability and whether this has subsequently led to improved relations between local police and community members.

It is suggested that this study could be significant in terms of the commitment of Australian police organisations to be more accountable to local communities. If police perceptions of accountability do fluctuate across communities, it is conceivable that a
corresponding inconsistency in the quality of police service also occurs, thereby adversely impacting upon a police organisation’s accountability initiatives.

**Research questions**

Specifically this research poses the question – *Have community policing initiatives changed police perceptions of accountability in Macquarie Fields and have they led to better police-community relations?* In order to answer this question a number of sub questions need to be asked:-

1. *To what extent do police and community service representatives think that adverse police community relations contributed to the Macquarie Fields conflict of 2005?*
2. *What was the nature of police-community relations prior to the riot?*
3. *How did police attitudes and behaviours influence community attitudes and behaviour?*
4. *What were police perceptions of their accountability to the community at the time of the conflict?*
5. *What community policing initiatives have been introduced in Macquarie Fields since the riots?*
6. *Have community policing initiatives changed police perceptions of accountability to the Macquarie Fields community and have they led to better police-community relations?*
7. *What was their intended impact on local police perceptions of their membership to the local community?*
8. *How have these changed police-community relations since the riots?*
9. To what extent do people attribute any changes to community policing initiatives?

10. Have police perceptions of accountability to the Macquarie Fields community changed?

Overview of thesis

The intention of this thesis is to examine community policing initiatives implemented at Macquarie Fields since the 2005 riots and whether they have altered local police perceptions of accountability to the community and enhanced police-community relations. This thesis also intends to add to the body of knowledge regarding policing at Macquarie Fields, a socially disorganised community, and whether the predominant socio-economic disadvantaged status of the residents has adversely impacted upon police perceptions of accountability. Although this study is specific to the Macquarie Fields Patrol and their community the findings of this study may be of significance to policing other disadvantaged communities, where problematic interactions exist between police and community members. In particular, the transferability of findings may be of relevance in terms of the adverse impact of a problematic work environment upon police notions of accountability and partnership to the community which may frustrate community policing initiatives.

The thesis is divided into ten chapters. This, the first chapter, introduces the problem and overviews the importance of the research, in terms of policing at Macquarie Fields and the policing of other socially disadvantaged communities within Australia and elsewhere.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter 2 locates the issue of police perceptions of accountability being influenced by community members’ predominant socio-economic status in a theoretical context. It reviews literature related to the importance of police accountability (Chappell, 1996; Walker, 2000) and the problematic nature of accountability mechanisms (Prenzler, 2009; Sarre, 2000). It provides a history of the challenges faced by the NSWP in terms of police accountability leading up to the 1981 Lusher Inquiry and the 1994 Wood Royal Commission. The recommendations and findings of these Inquiries are examined. Literature is also reviewed which evaluates NSWP reform following the Wood Royal Commission with a particular focus upon police accountability to communities and community consultation (Chan, 2007; Dixon, 2007 & Hay Group, 2002). It also reviews the literature concerning police organisations use of community policing initiatives to enhance police accountability (Kappelar, 2005; Roberg, Crank & Kuykendall, 1999), the importance of public support for such initiatives (Hawdon & Ryan, 2003; Lynch & Patterson, 1991), and concerns regarding the effectiveness and practicality of community policing (Chappell, 2009; Flink, 2002; Hawdon & Ryan, 2003; Herbert, 2009; Hunter & Barker, 2008). The review of literature also examines the commitment articulated by Australian police organisations regarding the enhancement of accountability through community policing practices. Literature reviewed also considers factors that could adversely impact upon community policing initiatives such as social disorganisation (Reisig & Parks, 2000; Xu, Fielder & Flaming, 2005) and police misconduct (Gau & Brunson, 2010; Weitzer, 2000). The chapter also reviews literature which indicates that it is not only public support and the lack thereof which can impact adversely against community policing initiatives. Literature is reviewed which considers that police officers’ attitudes and conduct can be adversely influenced by the negative aspects of the police culture (Ellis, 1991; Haar,
2001; Prenzler, 2009) and socially disorganised communities (Terrill & Reisig, 2003). The Chapter concludes by identifying gaps in knowledge concerning the relationship between social disorganisation and police perceptions of accountability.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Chapter 3 provides an explanation of the research design. It discusses the rationale for undertaking a qualitative approach and the ethnographic case study design for this study. The sampling considerations are canvassed along with the design for interview and observation data collection. The research process is explained which includes ethics approval, the collection of data from participants and data analysis and coding. Limitations of the research and ethical considerations are also discussed.
Chapter 4: History of Macquarie Fields Riots

This chapter reviews the history of the Macquarie Fields riots including the response of police. Also included are socio-economic indicators, census data and crime statistics. It outlines the silencing of community discontent following the riots; it provides the observations of academics regarding the political and media response to the riots. It also examines Parliamentary discussion via Hansard concerning the riots. In addition, this chapter discusses the views of academics concerning the causes of the Macquarie Fields riots as well as the contributing factors to the 1967 American race riots and the 1981 Brixton riots and examines possible similarities between these and the Macquarie Fields riots.

Chapter 5: Structures and Processes in Relation to Community Policing at Macquarie Fields.

Chapter Five describes and assesses the structures and processes in relation to community policing at Macquarie Fields. This is set against the backdrop of evidence deposed by NSWP before the New South Wales Parliamentary Standing Committee on Social Issues as to the community policing initiatives implemented by Macquarie Fields Police since the 2005 riots. Also examined is evidence deposed by the Government and NSWP indicating their belief that relations have improved between the police and locals, this is contrasted to other indicators which suggest the continuation of a problematic relationship between local police and community members. In addition, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Social Issues findings and recommendations concerning police-community relations at Macquarie Fields, as well as recent police-community initiatives are also examined.
Chapter 6: The Relationship between Macquarie Fields Police and their Local Community.

This chapter describes the findings of this study concerning the relationship between Macquarie Fields police and their local community. This is facilitated through the accounts of community service providers and police participants as well as observations conducted upon police participants interacting with community members. Findings discussed are that despite the attempts of police management at Macquarie Fields to be more accountable and better serve the local community, relationships between Macquarie Fields police and residents remain problematic.

Chapter 7: Underlying Factors that Explain the Relationship between Macquarie Fields Police and the local community

Chapter 7 discusses this study’s findings concerning the underlying factors which explain the problematic relationship between Macquarie Fields police and the local community. Findings are discussed which suggest that the problematic notions held by police concerning community accountability and partnership along with the adversarial manner in which some crime reduction strategies are conducted, are adversely influenced by negative police attitudes towards the community. In turn, police attitudes have been shaped by the work environment and perceptions of difference between themselves and community members. This chapter also discusses findings which indicate inadequacies in police education and training to prepare and assist police perform their duties.

Chapter 8: Discussion

This chapter discusses, in light of the theoretical literature, the expectations and surprises which arose from this study. The expectations include: police management’s attempts to make Macquarie Fields police more accountable; the continuation of poor
relations between police and the local community and crime reduction strategies being implemented by police at Macquarie Fields. This chapter also discusses the surprises arising from this study which include: accountability initiatives being implemented by police management failing to impact upon the attitudes of street police; police management’s community partnership initiatives failing to be embraced by street police; the negative impact of the ‘stopping, searching and moving on’ crime reduction strategy upon the police-community relationship and the adverse impact of younger inexperienced police upon police-community relations. This chapter also discusses possible contributing factors to the problematic relationship between local police and community members. These include: a problematic work environment; negative attitudes held by street police towards community members and police perceptions of ‘otherness’.

**Chapter 9: Implications for Policy, Practice & Research**

Chapter 9 presents this study’s recommendations in terms of implications for policy, practice and research as well as this study’s conclusion. It will be argued that police management at Macquarie Fields need to recognise and address the adverse impact of social disadvantage upon police notions of accountability, partnership and perceptions of difference between themselves and community members. Also discussed is the need for street police to shift their focus from predominantly crime fighting to one which encompasses accountability, partnership and procedural justice and problem oriented policing. In addition, recommendations are presented in terms of police training and practical policing strategies to help improve the police-community relationship. These include: field placements to assist officers understand social difference; introduction of police mentoring schemes for ‘at risk’ youth; teaching communication skills to assist
young inexperienced police communicate effectively with youth; greater emphasis placed upon de-escalation strategy training which could be enhanced by conflict management training; incorporation of community policing into the training curriculum for new police; the pairing of inexperienced police with more experienced officers; the deployment of additional policewomen to the Macquarie Fields patrol; greater involvement of local disadvantaged youth in police-community meetings and the review of the impact of certain police defensive tactics upon the problematic police-community relationship.

In addition, community initiatives are discussed which include: the introduction and training of social control strategies within the Macquarie fields community; social training to be delivered to local youth through schools; community empowerment facilitated through the regeneration of the Macquarie Fields area.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

This chapter discusses this study’s conclusion. Additional limitations relating to social desirability, sampling and the workplace environment are identified. In addition, the contribution of this research to the issue of the poor police-community relationship at Macquarie Fields is considered. Finally, this chapter discusses implications for future research in terms of the apparent gap in research concerning socially disorganised communities and their possible influence upon police perceptions of accountability.
Summary

This chapter as an introduction has highlighted the problematic nature of the relationship between the Macquarie Fields community and local police. It has also outlined the content of this thesis across the remaining nine chapters.

The next chapter locates the problem that although the NSWP would appear to be making attempts to improving relations between police and the Macquarie Fields community, there are a number of influential factors that must be taken into account. These include the need for public support and the effect of police misconduct and social disorganisation upon such. Other issues considered are factors which adversely impact upon attitudes of police towards the community they serve. These include the police culture; unconstructive experiences associated with operational policing; and the impact of socially disorganised communities upon police misconduct and attitudes of victim deservedness. Finally, with regards to Macquarie Fields, a model of explanation is constructed which proposes that police officers’ perceptions of accountability is influenced by their performance of duties in a socially disorganised community.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This review of literature will address the issues of whether or not it is likely that local communities can influence police perceptions of accountability, and whether or not current accountability measures are working. Although there have been successive attempts by police organisations to ensure their officers’ accountability, this still remains a problematic area (Bryett, Craswell, Harrison & Shaw, 1993; Chappell, 1996; 1986; Prenzler, 2000; Prenzler, 2009; Prenzler & Ronken, 2001; Sallmann & Willis, 1987; Sarre, 2000; Sarre & Tomaiono, 1999; Vera Institute of Justice, 2006; Waddington, 1999). Particular attention will be given to evaluating commitments of NSWP regarding community policing initiatives. Reference will also be made to similar reforms undertaken by Victoria, South Australia, Northern Territory, Queensland and Western Australia Police.

It will be argued that although police organisations’ commitments to community policing are essential for its success there are other influential factors, which cannot be ignored. For example, accomplishment of such policing initiatives depends upon the support of local communities (Brown & Benedict, 2002; Hawdon & Ryan, 2003; Roberg, Novak & Cordner, 2005; Sarre, 2000). This support can be detrimentally affected by both police misconduct and disrespect shown to members of local communities (Brandl, Frank, Worden & Bynum, 1994; Reisig, 2002; Sced, 2004; Tyler, 1990; Weitzer & Tuch, 2002). Social disorganisation may also be a contributing
factor impacting upon community members’ satisfaction with police (Huang & Vaughn, 1996; Maxson, Hennigan & Sloane, 2002; Nolan, Conti & Mcdevitt, 2004; Reisig & Parks, 2000; Sampson & Bartusch, 1998; Sprott & Doob, 2009; Xu, Fielder & Flaming, 2005) and subsequent support (Brown & Benedict, 2002; Brown & Coulter, 1983; Cao, Frank & Cullen, 1996; Reisig & Parks, 2000; Sampson & Bartusch, 1998; Weitzer, 2000). Social disorganisation is defined as a community’s inability “to realize common goals” and “solve chronic problems” (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003, p. 374) due to factors such as “poverty” and “weak social networks” (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003, p. 374). Community members’ perceptions and subsequent support can be adversely influenced as a result (Brown & Benedict, 2002; Brown & Coulter, 1983; Cao, Frank & Cullen, 1996; Reisig & Parks, 2000; Sampson & Bartusch, 1998; Weitzer, 2000).

Whilst some individuals’ attitudes and support for community policing initiatives can be impacted upon by factors such as police misconduct and social disorganisation, the review turns to explore potential factors which may adversely impact upon police attitudes and conduct towards the local communities they serve. Some suggest that recruits join the police with altruistic intentions (Foley, Guarneri & Kelly, 2008; Meagher & Yentes, 1986; Van Maanen, 1973; Wortley, 1992) and these are, in fact, enhanced by the positive impact of academy training upon the attitudes of recruits (Meagher & Yentes, 1986; Van Maanen, 1973; Wortley, 1992). However, others indicate that these altruistic values decay once recruits commence duties as officers at police stations and are exposed to socialisation into the negative aspects of the police culture and the negative experiences associated with operational policing (Chan, Devery & Doran, 2003; Haar, 2001; Prenzler, 2009). How do these claims apply to
notions of police accountability? Could it be that police recruits are socialised into the negative aspects of the police culture (Chan Devery & Doran, 2003; Havassy, 1997), and negatively affected by negative experiences associated with operational policing (Christie, Petrie & Timmins, 1996; Ellis, 1991)? Then, too, many writers posit a causal relationship between communities suffering social disorganisation and the conduct and attitudes of police in dealing with members of those communities (Alpert & Dunham, 1988; Ingram, 2007; Kane, 2002; Klinger, 1997; Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003; Lersch, Bazley, Mieczowski & Childs, 2008; Lynch & Patterson, 1991; Smith, 1986; Sobol, 2010; Stark, 1987; Terrill & Reisig, 2003). These claims will also be explored.

Whilst existing literature comments upon the possible relationship between the theory of social disorganisation and police misconduct it does not appear to address the issue of whether local communities experiencing social disorganisation influence police officers’ own perceptions of the level of their accountability. In other words, if police consider that the citizens of the community they are serving are undeserving does this diminish police perceptions of the level of their accountability and, subsequently, the level of service they are willing to provide?

**Overview of literature review**

In order to explore the relationship between police and community perceptions of accountability, the review addresses nineteen discrete areas. These are:
1. Accountability in Policing

- The meaning of the term ‘police accountability’
- Bodies to which police are said to be accountable
- The need for police to be held accountable
- The problematic nature of policing for accountability mechanisms
- NSWP accountability reform
- The Lusher Inquiry (1981)
- Wood Royal Commission (1994)
- The Wood Royal Commission findings concerning community policing, community consultation and accountability
- Evaluation of reform post Wood Royal Commission

1. Facilitating Accountability through Community Policing

- The use of community policing initiatives to facilitate police accountability
- Concerns regarding the effectiveness and practicality of community policing
- The commitment of Australian police organisations concerning accountability and community policing
- The importance of public support for the effective implementation of community policing

2. Factors Impacting upon Public Support and the Success of Community Policing Initiatives

- The effect of police misconduct
- The negative impact of Social Disorganisation upon communities attitudes towards police and subsequent support for community policing initiatives

3. Factors Adversely Impacting Upon the Noble Intentions of Police Recruits Leading to Negative Attitudes and Conduct in their Policing Role and a Resultant Decline of Services to the Community.

- The noble intentions of policing students and the positive impact of academy training
- Attitudes and conduct of police towards local communities affected by socialisation of police recruits to the negative aspects of the police culture and the unconstructive experiences associated with operational policing
- The detrimental impact of socially disorganised communities upon police misconduct and attitudes of victim deservedness

4. Social Disorganisation and Police Perceptions of Accountability

- Police perceptions of accountability influenced by the local communities in which they police

1. Accountability in Policing

*The meaning of the term ‘police accountability’*

This section discusses the concept of accountability. In particular, it considers the meaning of ‘police accountability’. In regards to accountability in general terms, Law (2001) commented that, “Accountability involves giving an account of performance” (Law, 2001, p.76). Dubnick and O’Kelly (2005) expand on this definition by drawing a link between an individual’s position and answerability. They state, “Most often,
accountability is associated with the idea of answerability, based on the premise that individual identity is determined by one’s position in a structural (usually hierarchical) relationship” (Dubnick & O’Kelly, 2005, p.148).

The term 'police accountability' is also often linked with the word “answerability”. Jefferson and Grimshaw (1984, p.10) suggest that the law is “the central form of institutional arrangement designed to ensure that the obligations of the police are upheld.” Walker (2000) elaborates further stating:

In theory, the police in a democratic society are accountable to the public and to the law. On one hand, they should be responsive to the people they serve and to the elected officials who are responsible for law enforcement agencies. At the same time, the police must be accountable to the law, and in particular their actions must conform to standards of due process and equal protection (Walker, 2000, p.7).

Regarding the role of courts in the facilitation of police accountability to the law, Reiner and Spencer (1993) comment:

It is uncontentious that police officers are accountable to the law in the concrete shape of the courts. This is in a double sense. They may be tried for misconduct amounting to a criminal offence, or sued for damages if it is alleged that they committed a tort against a member of the public (Reiner & Spencer, 1993, p.13).
Spencer (1985) asserts that accountability to the law means that police have a duty to enforce the law and therefore must act within the law. The actions of police, including the arresting and charging of individuals, are scrutinised by the legal system whenever an 'offender' pleads 'not guilty' to an offence. During the course of the hearing, the court hears evidence and examines the actions of police. In these cases, presiding magistrates and judges are subsequently in a position to ensure that police are accountable for their actions (Dixon, 1999; Prenzler, 2009; Sarre, 2000). However, as discussed further in the chapter, many academics consider police accountability via the law and courts as illusory.

**Bodies to which police are said to be accountable**

In our society, police are not just held accountable for their actions and inactions in relation to the law (Prenzler, 2009), but also to the internal rules and regulations of their respective policing organisations, and to externally appointed government bodies (Ransley, Anderson & Prenzler, 2007). In relation to accountability to their respective police organisations this is achieved through the facilitation of internal rules, regulations and internal disciplinary systems (Ransley et al., 2007). In New South Wales for example, the Professional Standards Command investigates complaints made against NSWP officers (Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity, 2009) and can enforce monetary, demotion or termination of employment penalties against police found guilty of misconduct.

In addition to police being held accountable to the law and the rules and regulations of their organisations, externally appointed government bodies have been created in an attempt to ensure police are held accountable (Ransley et al., 2007).
Furthermore, in modern times, there has been a drift away from police organisations controlling disciplinary processes to that of review by external bodies (Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity, 2009). As highlighted by the Commission, although quite diverse in nature and powers, at some time or another, all of Australia’s state, territory and federal governments have introduced their own external bodies to monitor police activity.

In New South Wales for instance, the Government has created the Ombudsman's office and the Police Integrity Commission (PIC) which also oversees the New South Wales Crime Commission (Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity, 2009). PIC was established following a recommendation of the Wood Royal Commission (Police Integrity Commission, 2011) which uncovered systemic corruption within the NSWP (Gilligan, 2004).

The roles of the NSW Ombudsman and PIC differ in that the Ombudsman deals with complaints against police of an administrative and decision making nature whereas PIC handles more serious complaints concerning police (Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity, 2009). In terms of the relationship between the NSW Ombudsman, PIC and the NSWP Professional Standards Command, which investigates police misconduct, the Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity (2009) noted close liaison exists to, “ensure that issues of interest to those agencies are considered within the NSW Police complaint management framework” (Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity, 2009, p.21).
A brief review of Australian police organisations’ accountability mechanisms also reveals external and internal accountability mechanisms. For instance, the South Australia Police have the Anti Corruption Branch which carries out investigations into allegations of corrupt police behaviour. In addition, an external body, the South Australia Police Complaints Authority, has an overseeing role over the conduct of internal police investigations (Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity, 2009).

The Queensland Police Service’s Ethical Standard Command oversees the internal investigation of complaints concerning Queensland police. This role is carried out in partnership with the Crime and Misconduct Commission which is the externally appointed overseeing body (Queensland Police Service Annual Report 2009-2010). The Crime and Misconduct Commission receives all complaints concerning police (Crime and Misconduct Commission, 2010) and depending upon the seriousness of the complaint, the Crime and Misconduct Commission decides, “…whether to deal with the complaint itself or refer the matter to the QPS to deal with, subject to CMC monitoring of how the QPS does so. The CMC may also deal with a complaint in cooperation with the QPS” (Crime and Misconduct Commission, 2010, p.29).
The Victorian Police also possesses an internal section, namely, the Ethical Standards Department which investigates unethical police conduct (Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity, 2009). In addition, the conduct of Victorian Police is oversighted by an external independent body, the Office of Police Integrity. All complaints concerning Victorian police are reviewed by this office and depending upon the seriousness of the complaint, matters can either be referred to Victoria Police for investigation or investigated by the Office of Police Integrity (Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity, 2009).

Turning to examples of international police oversighting bodies, complaints against members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) are investigated within the organisation but investigation is overseen by the Public Complaints Commission which is a separate external agency (Sen, 2010). If a complainant is dissatisfied with the results of the investigation they can request for the Public Complaints Commission to review the investigation and the Commission can refer the matter back to the RCMP for further investigation (Sen, 2010). In addition, the Public Complaints Commission can also investigate police misconduct (Prenzler, 2009). The Ombudsman for Northern Ireland is another example of an international external body of review. As highlighted by Prenzler (2009), “…the Ombudsman may refer less serious matters to the Chief Constable for formal investigation, but in practice it investigates all public complaints using civilian investigation teams” (Prenzler, 2009, p.164).
The need for police to be held accountable

Accountability is an important issue in policing, as police possess a considerable degree of authority and legal powers (Landa & Lewis, 1996; Prenzler, 2009; Reiner, 1992). In fact, in can be argued that police officers have the most extensive coercive powers in our society (Walker, 2000). As highlighted by Baker (2009), “Throughout Australia, police act as the internal coercive agency and controlling functionary of the states” (Baker, 2009, p. 140). In addition to possessing extensive powers, police in some situations are granted discretion in the exercise of those powers. This is derived from the doctrine of constabulary independence, which postulates that police, through the common law, have been provided with independence of their actions in enforcing the law. This discretion has been defined by Kleinig (1996) as a “permission, privilege or prerogative to use one’s own judgement about how to make a practical determination” (Kleinig, 1996, p.83).

Arguably, however, police do not possess total discretion in performing their law enforcement functions (Baker, 2005). In many situations police have the authority to perform a law enforcement function, but no discretion at all in deciding upon whether or not to carry out that function. For example, if an officer witnessed an offender assault and steal a handbag from an elderly woman, providing the execution of the arrest does not pose a threat to the safety of the officer or the community, then the officer would have no discretion as to whether or not the offender should be arrested (Miller, Blackler & Alexandra, 1997). In this type of situation discretion is constrained by the rules and regulations of the officer’s police organisation.
Police discretion not only comes from the doctrine of constabulary independence, but also from the police organisation and the community, through the presiding government (Prenzler, 2009). Through these different sources, police can be granted the use of discretion for specific law enforcement functions, or alternatively, they can have discretion reduced or taken away. Police, on many occasions, are directed by their police organisations to use their discretionary powers to provide a particular service or address a specific crime problem (Cox, 1996). For example, police are often directed by their superiors to participate in operations and arrest youths found committing specific street offences such as offensive behaviour.

With regard to police being granted discretionary powers by the community through the government, Kleinig (1996) observes, “the various laws, rules regulations and pronouncements governing police practice also provide a possible source for police discretionary authority” (Kleinig, 1996, p.90). In addition, Kleinig (1996) recognised that public consent can be considered as another source of police discretionary authority (p.89). In particular, police discretion can be reduced or increased as a result of public scrutiny through the media, activating legislative, judicial or administrative review.

There are advantages and disadvantages associated with police possessing discretion. Probably one of the most compelling reasons why police should possess discretion is the varied nature of police work. It would be impractical to have guidelines that instruct police on how to deal with every situation that may present itself during the course of policing duties (Cohen, 1996). Another advantage of police possessing discretionary powers is that it allows them to take into consideration the circumstances...
and type of individual involved in committing a non-serious offence. Discretion as to whether or not to charge may be appropriate when dealing with offenders who belong to vulnerable groups such as youth, the elderly and people suffering mental illness, people from non-English speaking backgrounds and Indigenous people. These groups “often require considerable discretion, because the lifestyle in which they are entrenched differs significantly from that of other populations” (Cox, 1996, p.53).

There are however, disadvantages to police possessing discretionary powers, and these relate mainly to a lack of accountability and possible abuse of powers (Edwards, 1999; Palmer, 1992). In fact, most of the ethical dilemmas faced by police originate from their discretionary powers (Pollock, 1998). Many police, during the course of their daily duties, work unsupervised, and, in many situations, away from the scrutiny of the public. Subsequently, police organisations address the problem of accountability by ensuring that police are held answerable for their actions or inaction. However, it can be argued that, if those mechanisms that hold police accountable are not present, or are perceived to be ineffective; this could be perceived by some officers as an invitation to commit unethical conduct. This relationship between police accountability, discretionary powers, lack of supervision and corrupt practices has been commented on by academics such as Prenzler and Ronken (2001) and Sarre (2000).

Another disadvantage of discretion is the possible opportunity it leaves for police to falsely accuse individuals of criminal offences. Known as 'process corruption', this was an area of corruption examined during the Wood Royal Commission into corruption in the NSWP. It was observed by Justice Wood (1997) that partial police investigations and prosecutions had their origins in the ability of officers to exercise discretion and
abuse their powers. Examples of process corruption uncovered by the Royal Commission included interference with prosecutions and the planting of evidence (Lewis, 1999). It has been observed that the use of process corruption has been defended by some police who argue, that the end result, the securing of a conviction against the accused, justifies the questionable or unlawful means by which it is achieved (Dixon, 1999). Another negative aspect of police discretion is that its misuse can potentially lead to miscarriages of justice. Ransley (2002) mentions that an underlying cause of some miscarriages of justice is police corruption and this is caused by police evidence gathering and investigative processes having little accountability.

Yet another problematic area associated with the use of police discretion is the negative influence of the ‘police culture’. The term ‘police culture’ has been defined by Collier (2001, p.472) as representing, “the norms, values and beliefs held by police officers. It permeates the operation of policing on a day-to-day basis”. Reuss-Ianni (1983, p.1) argues that two separate police cultures exist and these consist of the “street cop culture” and a “management cop culture”. Many theorists consider the way in which police officers practice their discretionary powers can be adversely influenced by the negative aspects of the police occupational culture. These characteristics include “…cynical or pessimistic perspective regarding the social environment, an attitude of constant suspicion, an isolated social life coupled with a strong code of solidarity with other police officers, political conservatism, racial prejudice and sexism” (Chan, 1997, p.43).

Crank (1998) expands upon these definitions and mentions that the police culture is similar to many other cultures as it consists of interdependent actors, who subsist in a
broader social environment. Influences upon police accountability are therefore likely to extend well beyond police station pressures, into officers’ backgrounds and lives and the communities in which they work.

Although discrimination is prohibited by law, discriminatory acts such as harassment, stereotyping and violence are committed by some police in the course of their duties. Research would suggest that decisions made by police as to whether or not to speak to or arrest an individual are not made purely in an objective vacuum but rather are influenced by the negative characteristics of the police culture (Waddington, 1999; Worden, 1989). Waddington states that police in talking to some individuals and not others discriminate against the “poor, ill-educated, young and often ethnic minority residents of deprived neighbourhoods” and this can subsequently cause a “false over-representation of particular groups” (Waddington, 1999, p.37).

Police discretionary powers can also be misused to under-police some victims belonging to minority groups. For example, it has been argued that inaction by police concerning Aboriginal domestic violence has suppressed community knowledge of the problems of child abuse and domestic violence within Aboriginal families (Hazlehurst, 1992). Aboriginal people are not the only members of our community that have been subjected to under-policing as victims of crime. Bird (1992), also identified indifference as existing within Australian police forces when responding to complaints from individuals of non-English speaking backgrounds.

**The problematic nature of policing for accountability mechanisms**

The previous section reviewed literature which focused on the need for police to be held accountable. This section examines literature in which theorists have expressed
dissatisfaction with present accountability mechanisms. For example, Prenzler (2000) has observed, “...traditional controls such as internal discipline and review of police procedures in court have been shown by successive inquiries in many countries to be easily subverted” (Prenzler, 2000, p.659).

Firstly, looking at criticisms of police organisations investigating reports of police misconduct and imposing penalties upon their employee police, the predominant theme which arises from these concerns is the issue of whether police can effectively investigate other police (Prenzler, 2009; Vera Institute of Justice, 2006). Prenzler (2009) considers that police investigating police makes for an ineffective system of review and lists contributing factors to the problem as including “internal loyalty” and a “code of silence” (Prenzler, 2009, p.62). Another issue which may impact upon the effectiveness of internal accountability mechanisms is the negative influence of police culture and the possibility that it adversely influences the opinions of internal investigators as to the seriousness of the police complaint. This is raised by Lewis (1999) who observes that “…police in liberal democratic societies are expected to abide by community standards in terms of their behaviour, not by the standards acceptable to a police culture or subculture” (Lewis, 1999, p.29).

Also, Prenzler and Ronken (2001) comment upon the issue that Internal Affairs investigations have been shown to be biased and are easily perceived as biased. Complainants are treated as though they are “being anti-police and malicious” (Prenzler & Ronkin, 2001, p.159). An important issue concerning police investigating the misconduct of fellow officers is the unfavourable perception it may create amongst members of the community. Landau (1996), restates a very old principle that “justice
must not only be done it must be seen to be done” (Landau (1996, p.294). Landau (1996, p.300) reported the results of a study she conducted in Toronto, Canada, in 1994, concerning respondents who made complaints against police. She found that in excess of 70% of respondents considered that it was inappropriate to have police investigating their complaint; only 14% of complainants considered that the internal police investigation into their complaint was adequate; and 35% of the complainants felt that bias had occurred.

Although Australian governments have created externally appointed bodies of review in an effort to hold police accountable, problems have been identified with this type of accountability mechanism. For instance, Prenzler (2000) has observed that in an effort to address the, “failure of internal control mechanisms” (Prenzler, 2000, p.659) external bodies have been appointed to deal with police misconduct. Prenzler contends that a possible problem with external bodies is that it exemplifies those problems that ‘Capture Theory’ proposes. This theory, “…explains poor performance in regulation with reference to techniques by which the group being regulated subverts the impartiality and zealousness of the regulator” (Prenzler, 2000, p.659). The influence exerted can range from “subtle forms of inappropriate influence” conducted with the best of intentions by the body being held accountable, to the groups that are subject of regulation attempting to subvert the course of justice by “bribery or blackmail.” Prenzler subsequently calls for a “clearer separation between police and the regulator” (Prenzler, 2000, p.659).

In addition, it is instructive to note that many external bodies of review are limited in their overseeing functions of allegations of complaints concerning police misconduct
(Prenzler, 2009). He notes that, many external review bodies possess, “very limited capacity to be directly engaged in investigations and discipline” (Prenzler, 2009, p.62). A relevant example of this point is the Victoria Police. Although it has the external review body, namely the Office of Police Integrity, this body only has an overseeing role of police misconduct investigations. In this limited role it can only make recommendations and is unable to take direct action (Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity, 2009).

The Queensland Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC) has also been identified as possessing limitations to its overseeing role. As noted by Prenzler (2000) the Commission is limited as it is unable to take punitive action against police and its reliance upon the use of police as investigators. In terms of the CMC’s limitations these have been recognised by the Commission itself. For instance, the CMC (2010) reports:

However, the CMC’s monitoring function lacks potency because, in cases involving police misconduct, the Commission can only advise and encourage the QPS to deal with a matter appropriately, it cannot direct it to take a particular course of action (Crime and Misconduct Commission, 2010, p.66).

The South Australia Police Complaints Authority is another example of an external body of review which has a limited capacity in terms of the investigation of police misconduct. The Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity (2009) observed, “With a few exceptions, the Authority does not conduct primary investigations of police complaints” (Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity, 2009, p.8).
Looking at international accountability mechanisms, the practice of the Ombudsman for Northern Ireland to use police in certain circumstances to investigate police misconduct has raised the concern of human rights groups (Sen, 2010). In contrast however, Prenzler (2009) notes in recent times there has been a greater role given to external agencies and cites PIC and the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland as examples. He states, “Both these agencies employ non-police investigators and hold a wider remit for assessing the corruption prevention strategies of the departments they regulate” (Prenzler, 2009, p.63).

In addition to concerns regarding external accountability mechanisms, some writers consider that the concept of police accountability to the law in practice does not provide for effective accountability. The criminal justice system is characterised by the selective exclusion of cases long before any commencement of trial. This situation also applies to cases where the ‘offender’ chooses to plead guilty, as the courts usually do not review the actions of arresting police. As a result, even though police are accountable to the law for their actions and inaction, in the majority of situations, the use of police discretion is not reviewed by the court system (Sarre, 2000; Sarre & Tomaino, 1999; Waddington, 1999).

Also, some theorists argue that courts more readily accept the evidence deposed by police, as opposed to conflicting evidence deposed by citizens (Lustgarten, 1986; Reiner, 1992). Another factor which may diminish the effectiveness of the law as an accountability mechanism is that if police make the decision not to take any formal action concerning a matter, then the courts are not in a position to review the conduct
of police or decisions made by police not to proceed with a matter (Bryett, Harrison & Shaw, 1994).

However, some writers when considering present forms of police accountability mechanisms feel that police being held accountable for wrongdoing is only part of the solution to the accountability problem. For instance, Maguire (1991) has stated, “…complaints are only one piece of the jigsaw: without improvements in training, supervision, police-public consultation, and other broader mechanisms of accountability” (Maguire, 1991, p.208).

The following section examines reform in accountability mechanisms with a particular focus on the NSWP. It will be argued that although attempts at reform have occurred, accountability and its facilitation through community processes still remains a problematic area.

**NSWP accountability reform**

There is little doubt that, in the last ten years, Australian police organisations have attempted reform in terms of accountability. Given that this thesis is concerned with the policing of a disadvantaged community in New South Wales, this discussion centres primarily upon community policing and accountability reform in New South Wales. Chan (2007) has argued that in recent times New South Wales Police (NSWP) has experienced “two major waves of reform” (p. 329) and that this has occurred as a result of the Lusher Inquiry of 1981 and the 1997 Wood Royal Commission. This discussion will also look briefly at other Australian Police Services and provide examples of steps undertaken to assist the facilitation of police accountability. As such, an image emerges of internal and external assessments of police accountability following reform attempts.
The following table (Table 1.1) extracted from the Wood Royal Commission Final Report (1997) illustrates the background of events within NSWP from 1954 to the 1981 Lusher Inquiry. It provides a selected history of “…some of the major organisational developments, allegations or incidents of corruption, and recent policing changes” (Wood, 1997, p. 193).

Table 1 - History of problems and events within the NSWP leading up to the 1981 Lusher Inquiry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Report of the Royal Commission on Liquor Laws in NSW is presented. Commissioner Maxwell is critical of policing in this area, including senior officers. Notes an apparent lack of leadership, enthusiasm and ingenuity (p.A 198).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/10/54</td>
<td>Report of the Royal Commission into allegations of police brutality to David Edward Studley-Ruxton released. The Commissioner rejects Ruxton’s story that he was bashed by police. The Commissioner is unable to find how the injuries to face and arms were received, however, he entertains ‘more than a slight suspicion’ that these may have been caused by police (p.A 198).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Ng Biu Kuen, a Chinese restaurant owner, reports presence of senior police in Dixon Street casino. He is allegedly assaulted by police and later charged with possession of opium. He alleges this was a payback. (p.A 199). His conviction was overturned on appeal and the two police officers involved were departmentally charged. The Premier and Police Commissioner at the time resisted calls for a Royal Commission into the matter (Wood, 1997, p.59).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/6/71</td>
<td>Shirley Brifman appears on ABC television and makes a statutory declaration to the effect that: as a brothel keeper she had made weekly payments to a member of the NSW Police Vice Squad (p. A 200). Police investigations into the allegations were never fully resolved (Wood, 1997, p.63).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/12/71</td>
<td>A judicial inquiry into the Ng, Stanevics and Rixon cases is resisted as is the attempt by the Leader of the Opposition to establish a Select</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Internal undercover operation to investigate allegations that police have been involved in organised crime and its protection. Police Commissioner Wood orders raid on Criminal Intelligence Unit (CIU) offices to recover tapes and transcripts of telephone taps carried out under the operation (p. A 201).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1978</td>
<td>Privacy Committee examines Special Branch and criminal records in NSW, and critics record keeping practices (p. A 202).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Report of the Solicitor-General concerning the prosecution of Roy Cessna and Timothy Milner and the allegations that Magistrate Murray Farquhar, solicitor Morgan Ryan and Police Commissioner Mervyn Wood had conspired to pervert the course of justice in relation to the sentencing of Cessna and Milner. Charges were eventually withdrawn (p. A 202).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/7/79</td>
<td>The Commonwealth-New South Wales Joint Task Force on Drug Trafficking (JTF) commences operations. Uses unlawful telephone intercepts installed by NSW Police Service Technical Services Unit, after seeking approval from the officer in charge of the BCI (p. A 203).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 1979</td>
<td>Final Report of Woodward Royal Commission released. Finds that Donald Mackay had been murdered by a Griffith based drug organisation…finds that Detectives Ellis, Borthwick and Robbins had close ties with marijuana activities (p. A 203).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**The Lusher Inquiry (1981)**

In terms of the aforementioned history, Chan (1997) argued that as far back as World War II and throughout the 1970s the NSWP had been the subject of rumours concerning “corruption and malpractice” (p. 118). Justice Lusher was appointed in 1979 by the serving Labour Government to conduct an inquiry into the administration of the New South Wales Police Force and its relationship with the Executive
Government (Finnane, 1999). Lusher found that the NSWP consisted of an organisation “…in which long-established patterns of hierarchy had stifled the capacity for innovation and responsiveness” (Finnane, 1999, p. 21). The Lusher Inquiry “made more than 200 recommendations in a wide range of areas, including management, recruitment, training, promotion, working conditions and police corruption” (Chan, 1997, p. 119). With regard to the issue of corruption, Lusher considered this was adversely influenced by the organisational culture and should be addressed “through organisational change” (Finnane, 1999, p. 31).

It is noted that Lusher’s findings highlighted two important elements relating to community policing. Firstly, he considered that police should not be seen as being separate to the community. Secondly, he argued that police could not perform their roles effectively ‘without the acceptance, co-operation and approval of that community’ (Lusher, 1981, p. 45). In terms of the impact of the Lusher report on the NSWP, Chan and Dixon (2007) reported that in acting upon Lusher’s recommendations, the organisation had made significant changes with regard to recruitment, training and community policing.

The subsequent reform of the NSWP was undertaken under the leadership of Commissioner John Avery. In fact, as argued by Chan (1997), this “was a turning point in the policing history of New South Wales” (p. 119). Commissioner Avery advocated that the NSWP needed to focus on community policing and accountability to the community (Chan, 1997; Finnane, 1999). In addition, under Commissioner Avery’s leadership, police recruitment and training was reformed. For instance, there was an increase in the acceptance of applicants from ethnic groups, Aboriginals and females.
Concerning reform in the training of police recruits, Chan and Dixon (2007) observed that “Recruit training adopted a totally new educational philosophy, a redesigned curriculum and a new policy in relation to staffing and administration” (p. 445).

The discussion now turns to events within the NSWP that contributed to the formation of the Wood Royal Commission in 1994. In the years following the 1981 Lusher Inquiry there had been a “… long-running history of rumours and allegations about corruption and misconduct in the police generally, but particularly involving several high-profile detectives” (Chan & Dixon, 2007, p. 445). The following table (Table 1.2) provides extracts from the Wood Royal Commission Final Report (1997) that illustrate some of the problems and events experienced by NSWP for the period following the tabling of the 1981 Lusher Report up until the commencement of the Wood Royal Commission.

Table 2 – *Problems and events experienced by NSWP from 1982 to 1995*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug 1982</td>
<td>Ombudsman’s inquiry into complaints re dealings between police and tow truck operators (p. A 204).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/6/83</td>
<td>Ministerial Working Party to examine the regulation of tow trucks concludes its examination and reports to the Minister. It finds that improper practices were occurring in the tow truck industry, involving police (p. A 205).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/12/83</td>
<td>Amendments to Police Regulation (Allegations of Misconduct) Act assented to. Principal changes include:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• strengthening of Ombudsman’s role in relation to complaints against police;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ombudsman may carry out his/her own investigation if not satisfied by the Internal Affairs investigation of the complaint (p. A 205).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Community-based policing is introduced and adopted as the principal operating strategy of the Service (p. A 205).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29/9/84</td>
<td>On ABC-TV’s Four Corners, Stephen Bazley, former member of Mr Asia syndicate, alleges that seven NSW police officers were involved in heroin trafficking, protecting drug dealers, using standover tactics and redistributing drugs for their own profit (p. A 206). The police Service was criticised by the Ombudsman for its failure to conduct a thorough investigation into the matter (Wood, 1997, p.73).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29/3/85</td>
<td>Commonwealth Letters Patent to Justice Donald Stewart for Royal Commission into Alleged Telephone Interceptions (The Age Tapes Royal Commission) (p. A 206). It was found that the Police Service had been illegally intercepting telephone calls for almost 20 years (Wood, 1997, p.74).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 1985</td>
<td>NSW Police Service Operation Raindrop commences, to examine a prison informant’s allegation of corrupt dealings between himself and a number of police (p. A 207). The Inquiry drew significant controversy in terms of the conduct of police during the investigations and subsequent prosecutions (Wood, 1997, p.76).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/4/86</td>
<td>Report of Royal Commission of inquiry into Alleged Telephone Interceptions (The Age Tapes Royal Commission) presented (p. A 208).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 1987</td>
<td>NSW Police Operation Casper commences to investigate allegations of police association with illegal casinos (p. A 209).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>NSW Police IPSU initiated Task Force Flinstone, to investigate the role of civilians and police allegedly involved in the conversion of stolen motor vehicles and their subsequent disposal in NSW, Victoria and Queensland (p. A 209). A detective sergeant from the Motor Squad was dismissed from the Police service for attempting to pervert the course of justice and neglect of duty as a police officer (Wood, 1997, p.75).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Police Community Consultative Committees established at patrol level as a community-based policing strategy (p. A 209).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1989</td>
<td>Detective Sergeant Larry Churchill and other officers of Kings Cross Patrol arrested and charged with supply of illicit drugs (p. A 210).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 1989</td>
<td>ICAC report on Hakim matter is released. It relates to an investigation and hearing arising out of a raid by police officers on Frank Hakim’s premises, following which it was alleged that evidence was fabricated to the detriment of Hakim by senior police (p. A 210).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 1991</td>
<td>The ICAC Report on Investigation into Sutherland Licensing Police released. Findings include that: Payments were being made by the licensee of a hotel to a licensing officer, who later resigned; free meals and gifts of liquor were made available to licencing officers and that such conduct was widespread; consideration be given to the prosecution of one of the officers for having received bribes (p. A 212).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/4/91</td>
<td>Staunton Report on Brennan shooting is released. As a result four police face charges for neglect of duty (p. A 212).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1991</td>
<td>The ICAC Report on investigation into Police and Truck Repairers released. The report finds that police received payments from truck repair companies to act as ‘spotters’ (p. A 212).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/7/91</td>
<td>Angus Rigg arrested and held in police cells overnight. Attempts suicide and is left severely brain damaged (p. A 212).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Eight Customer Councils, formerly Community Consultative Committees, are established to strengthen links between police and communities in NSW. Each Region has one city and one country-based Council (p. A 213).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/3/92</td>
<td>ABC-TV documentary ‘Cop it Sweet’ screened. This was an ABC documentary which showed Redfern Police working the beat (p. A 213).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 1993</td>
<td>Corruption Prevention Plan for the Police Service released. The Plan aims to ‘make corruption untenable in the Police Service by improving professional conduct, improving management practices and systems, changing police culture, and empowering members to act against corruption’ (p. A 216).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 1993</td>
<td>Gaming Squad disbanded following evidence of corrupt conduct in ICAC hearings (p. A 216).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>24/1/95</td>
<td>Report by NSW Ombudsman: Police Internal Investigations: poor quality police investigations into complaints of police misconduct is released. Recommends that the Police Service reviews the management of investigations of complaints against police officers (p. A 218).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Wood Royal Commission (1994)**

The Wood Royal Commission was established in 1994 through the parliamentary motion of an independent member, John Hatton, with the support of the opposition Labour Party. At the time, the Liberal Government and serving Police Commissioner were opposed to the formation of such an inquiry (Brown, 2004; Dixon, 2004; Gilligang, 2004). Various academics have commented upon the Royal Commission’s success in uncovering corruption within the NSWP. For instance, Gilligan (2004) provided examples of the type of corruption that the Royal Commission exposed. These included:

…process corruption; gratuities and improper associations; substance abuse, fraudulent practices; assaults and abuse of police powers; compromise or favourable treatment in prosecutions; theft and extortion; protection of the drug trade; protection of club and vice operators; protection of gaming and betting interests; drug trafficking; interference with internal investigations and the code of silence and other circumstances suggestive of corruption. (Gilligan, 2004, p. 31).
With regard to the causes of this corruption, Chan and Dixon (2007) indicated that the Royal Commission found:

[D]efficient management which mistook rhetoric about community policing for change in police practices, an inward-looking culture which protected wrongdoers and penalised whistleblowers and the corrosive effects of unsuccessful attempts to suppress illegal drugs and other popular but illicit product and services. (Chan & Dixon, 2007, p. 446).

However, it is noted that whilst Wood’s uncovering of police corruption was widely applauded in most circles, some academics were critical of the focus of the inquiry. For instance, Gilligan (2004) considered that Wood isolated the issue of corruption solely to the actions/inactions of police. This failed to address other players within the criminal justice system such as the judiciary, the Department of Public Prosecutions and the legal profession (Gilligan, 2004, p. 33), which according to the author led to the inability of the Royal Commission “to be reflective about institutional conditions conducive to corruption” (Gilligang, 2004, p. 33).

Notwithstanding the above criticism, the Wood Royal Commission made numerous wide-ranging recommendations which included:

- **Organisational transformation.** The formation of police patrols which would replace district patrol structures. In addition, police performing duties in an administrative/clerical function were to be transferred to operational duties and replaced by clerical staff.

- **Recruitment.** The police service was to undertake steps to recruit applicants from a greater diversity of cultural backgrounds.
• *Training of recruits.* The management and training of police recruits was to be enhanced by the involvement of civilian educators.

• *Training of police managers.* Police working in supervisory positions such as shift supervisors and Local Area Commanders would be required to undertake management courses conducted by external providers.

• *Integration of ethics and integrity principles.* The topics of ethics and integrity to be integrated into all levels of police training, which would encompass recruit through to senior management level.

• *Police undertaking secondary employment.* Certain areas of employment such as the security and liquor industries were deemed as not being suitable for police undertaking secondary employment.

• *Complaints against police.* The First Interim Report of the Royal Commission was delivered in February, 1996. As a result of its recommendations, the Police Integrity Commission (PIC) was created. PIC was provided with the “primary responsibility to investigate or to co-ordinate the investigation of serious police misconduct” (Wood, 1997, p. 3). Subsequent to this recommendation, the Royal Commission’s Final Report extended the role of PIC to include the investigation of serious complaints against police and having an overseeing role of Internal Affairs investigations involving police corruption. PIC also supplemented the role of the New South Wales Ombudsman’s office, which deals with ‘less serious complaints’ (Chan, 2007, p. 329). With regard to the Police Internal Affairs Branch, it was considered that it should retain the responsibility of identifying and investigating the corrupt activities of police. It was also to have its role extended to include integrity testing of police and the investigation of certain complaints against police which were “deemed
unsuitable for the Police Integrity Commission and the relevant Local Commander” (Wood, 1997, p. 547). Furthermore, Patrol and Local Area Commanders, depending upon the seriousness of a matter, were provided with the authority to deal with complaints and subsequent managerial action concerning police under their control.

- **Investigation of criminal matters.** A greater involvement of police supervisors was required to monitor the performance of police in the field, especially in regard to arrests, the interviewing of suspects and processing of individuals in custody. In addition, there was to be a greater involvement of uniformed police in investigations. Furthermore, it was considered necessary that during criminal investigations greater emphasis was to be placed upon obtaining evidence through forensic and surveillance procedures and less on evidence of “criminal informants and confessions” (Wood, 1997, p. 552). With regard to the execution of search warrants, where the expectation existed that substantial amounts of cash or drugs were to be found, civilian observers were to be utilised. It was also considered necessary that police use hand-held recorders to record their official conversations with members of the public and suspects.

- **Arrest alternatives.** It was deemed that where possible that police should use arrest as a matter of last resort. Preferred alternatives such as cautions, court attendance and field attendance notices were to be used.

- **Cultural change within the police organisation.** The Royal Commission identified three main areas within the NSWP in which reform to the organisational culture was needed. Firstly, NSWP needed to “operate in an open way to serve the citizens of the State with honesty”. Secondly, the organisation was required to be more accepting of “diverse ideas and cultures”
and finally, there was a need to replace “an internal culture of fear and control” (Wood, 1997, p. A247).

**The Wood Royal Commission’s findings concerning community policing, community consultation and accountability**

In addition to the aforementioned findings and recommendations, Justice Wood examined the issue of community policing, police consultation with communities and the facilitation of police accountability to the public through these processes. In highlighting the importance of community policing, Wood (1997) stated, “In recent times, community policing has emerged as a primary strategy for policing and crime prevention” (p. 381). Furthermore, Commissioner Wood identified the need for police to work in partnership with the community to achieve their problem-solving objectives. In order to achieve this goal, Wood considered that police needed to develop formal arrangements to facilitate consultation between themselves and the communities they serve (Wood, 1997).

In addition, Justice Wood recognised that as part of the reform agenda, police accountability to the public needed to be addressed. He considered that this could be best achieved through the process of community consultation, stating:

> Public accountability also needs to be strengthened as part of the reform agenda…the Service needs to be much clearer in its dialogue with the community as to what it can achieve with the resources provided, its priorities and how the police-community partnership can be advanced in many areas (Wood, 1997, p. A248).
Subsequently, the Final Report of the Royal Commission (1997) recommended:

A review be undertaken within each patrol to examine:

- Its existing community consultation arrangements; and
- The problems and outcomes specific to its area that would benefit from community consultation
- In light of such review, each patrol commander, in consultation with the region commander, put into effect such form of Community Consultative groups or strategies for community feedback as best meet its needs
- In establishing such arrangements there be close consultation with local government and other bodies such as the Local Chamber of Commerce, to ensure that there is effective community contribution to local policing (Wood, 1997, p. 395).

Notwithstanding the Royal Commission’s extensive recommendations, criticism does exist concerning Commissioner Wood’s understanding and ensuing recommendations regarding the makeup and function of community consultative committees. For instance, Dixon (1999) argued that although the Commission examined models of community consultation in England and Wales it failed to identify and address a fundamental deficiency, being the absence of any “redistribution of power” (p. 155) from police to the community. This occurs as police set the agenda and run the meetings, thereby maintaining control of the process.
Review of reform post Wood Royal Commission

The following discussion turns to examining the issue of reform within the NSWP following the Royal Commission’s recommendations. It pays particular attention to community consultation and accountability initiatives. NSWP commenced reform processes whilst the Royal Commission was in progress, and as reported by Chan and Dixon (2007), “Reform was generally developed in a process of interaction between Police Service and Commission” (p. 448). The reform undertaken was extensive (Chan, 2007), and as observed by Dixon (1999):

…major changes have been (and continue to be) made in the Police Service. Notably the managerial and command structure has been thoroughly rearranged, complaints procedures have been reformed, new education and training programs have been developed, new crime policing strategies have been introduced (Dixon, 1999, p. 138).

The progress of reform was highlighted within NSWP Annual Reports published during the period 1997–99. For instance, the 1996–97 Annual Report stated that “Many of the Commission’s 174 recommendations were being addressed during 1996–1997” (NSWP, 1997, p. 6). The Annual Report also mentioned that the “Commissioners Reform Agenda” was initiated as a direct response to the Royal Commission’s recommendations and intended “to repair the breach of trust between the service and the community” (NSWP Service, 1997, p. 8). By June 1997 NSWP had completed Phase 1 of a three-phase reform process in which deficiencies identified by the Royal Commission were addressed. These included the objectives to:
…promote integrity and eradicate negative aspects of the existing police culture, streamline management and lines of accountability, improve management of complaints and police behaviour generally and introduce proactive strategies, including integrity testing and adoption of revised Code of Conduct and Ethics (NSWP Service, 1997, p. 8).

In addition, the organisational structure of the NSWP was changed through the introduction of local area commands in combination with a flatter command structure. Other reforms included the releasing of police from administrative duties and moving them to front-line policing roles. The Special Branch was disbanded, an internal witness support policy was launched and integrity testing of police officers was introduced as a measure to fight corruption through an expanded role of the Internal Affairs Branch.

The NSWP implementation of the Royal Commission’s recommendations continued throughout the period 1997–98. The NSWP reported in its 1998 Annual Report that:

Thirteen months after the Final Report of the Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service was handed down by Justice James Wood in May 1997, 100 of its 174 recommendations (57%) had been completed by the service while work continued on the remainder. Of the implemented Final Report recommendations, 68 were completed in the year to June 1998 and most were directly connected to the breakthrough reform priorities. The remaining recommendations are expected to be finalised by the end of 1999 (NSWP Service, 1998, p.10).
Reform during this period included the introduction of Operations and Crime Review Panels which involved Patrol and Region Commanders appearing before the Commissioner and his executive team to report their patrol’s crime reduction strategies and outcomes. Other reforms flowing from the Royal Commission’s recommendations included improved criminal investigation practices, which involved ‘intelligence-led policing’ that included the identification and targeting of crime ‘hot spots’.

The NSWP Annual Report for the period 1998–99 summarised the continuation of NSWP reform following the Royal Commission’s recommendations. The NSWP Commissioner at the time, Peter Ryan, stated:

> The year has seen a further consolidation in the reform process and improvements to crime reduction and service delivery…Internal Affairs have reinforced the Service’s commitment to tackle corruption and address integrity issues…Implementation of the Police Royal Commission recommendations, which is almost complete, has led to improvements in processes that emphasise accountability and performance and recognise teamwork and initiative (NSWP Service, 1999, pp. 5–6).

In addition, the 1998–99 Annual Report made reference to the implementation of the Royal Commission’s recommendation that the newly formed PIC utilise the services of an external auditor “to conduct a qualitative and strategic audit of the Service’s reform process (known as QSARP)” (NSWP Service, 1999, p. 9). Furthermore, the Annual Report indicated that the QSARP review undertaken by the Hay Group commenced in March 1999 and was to be conducted over the course of three years, and that the results of this review were to be provided to “the Minister for Police and the Commissioner” (NSW Police Service, 1999, p. 9).
The discussion now turns to the Hay Group’s analysis of NSWP reform following the Royal Commission’s recommendations concerning community policing, community consultation and the facilitation of police accountability through these processes. As previously mentioned, the Royal Commission identified community policing as a major factor in the reform process. The Hay Group’s audit of the NSWP reform process, however, discovered that the NSWP response to this issue was inadequate. The QSARP report stated:

In our opinion, NSW police has not clearly resolved its stance on community policing. In examination of NSW Police documents, we note ambiguous rhetoric and narrow definitions of community policing. In none of the documents received did we find evidence of the kind of community policing envisaged by the Royal Commission (Hay Group, 2002, p. 74).

Although the Hay Group (2002) did recognise that some Local Area Commands displayed good community policing initiatives such as “…using discretion and creative approaches” (p. 284) the auditors felt that this fell short of the Royal Commission’s recommendations. The Hay Group attributed this to a number of factors. Firstly, it identified that organisational media releases, annual reports and policy documents contained certain themes in terms of ‘crime reduction’ and ‘crime fighting’. The Hay Group (2002) observed this “…combative language is incongruous with the philosophy of community policing which places greater emphasis on problem solving and crime prevention” (p. 74).
In addition, the Hay Group expressed the view that as Operations and Crime Review Panels concentrated on Local Area Commanders reporting their patrol’s crime statistics and clean-up rates this consequently neglected the reporting of community outcomes. They concluded, “…this suggests a lack of commitment to the principles of community policing and in its place a continuing over-reliance on crime statistics as the primary measure of police performance” (Hay Group, 2002, p. 87).

With regard to community consultative committees, the Hay Group’s QSARP report (2002) identified deficiencies within NSWP reform. The report stated, “In our examination of community consultation practices this year, we found that little progress has been made in this key area of reform” (Hay Group, 2002, p. 267). In searching for causes for this lack of reform, the Hay Group was of the view that executive police, such as Region Commanders, were not taking remedial action when Local Area Commands were found to be lacking in community consultation processes even though positive progress in terms of community consultation being included in Operations and Crime Review Panels meeting agendas was identified. However, the auditors reported that no evidence was sighted that NSWP was using “any local or international research to drive its community consultation strategies” (Hay Group, 2002, p. 268). In its conclusion, the Hay Group (2002) reported:

Other than broad statements of intent, there is no evidence of the CET taking a proactive role in the development of local community consultation strategies, or of these being cascaded through the organisation. Nor can we find the region Commander playing a proactive role in this respect. We conclude that the lack of CET direction on local level consultation is a sign that the CET is not
focused on local level consultation as a core strategy of NSW Police (Hay Group, 2002, p. 268).

With regard to the facilitation of police accountability to the community through community policing and its consultative processes, the QSARP discovered shortcomings in the NSW Police Service reform process. The Hay Group (2002) commented “...we found no evidence of formal reporting of the processes and outcomes of community consultation to the CET, and, through them to the wider community” (p. 267).

The Hay Group (2002) also observed that ‘Since community consultation is not required to be included in business plans, there is no system by which Commanders are held accountable for their performance in this regard’ (p. 268). They concluded that “…the absence of accountability mechanisms, the lack of coordination with business plans, the absence of organisation-wide coordination of local experiences and the lack of formal reporting to the public, to be obstacles to real reform in this area” (p. 284).
It is instructive to note that Chan and Dixon (2007), in examining the impact of the Wood Royal Commission and taking into account the evaluation of the Qualitative and Strategic Audit of the Reform Process (QSARP), concluded that QSARP found the efforts of NSWP to conduct reform was inadequate. Furthermore, these authors held that the NSWP and Government ignored the findings and recommendations of the QSARP process. They stated, “The Government’s almost contemptuous dismissal of the QSARP reports provided the clearest indication that the Commission’s truth had had its day” (Chan & Dixon, 2007, p. 464). These comments are somewhat supported through reviews of NSWP annual reports published during the QSARP review period. For instance, the NSWP 2000–01 Annual Report made little mention of the QSARP assessment. The Commissioner at the time, Peter Ryan, provided a general comment that NSWP had been “working with the Police Integrity Commission and QSARP auditors to identify other opportunities for the progression of reform” (NSWP Service, 2001, p. 4). A review of the annual reports published by the NSWP during the periods 2001–02 and 2002–03 undertaken by the researcher reveals no mention of the QSARP reports findings and recommendations. In addition there is no mention of steps taken by NSWP to rectify any identified deficiencies discovered during the QSARP process.

More broadly, annual reports of Australian police organisations indicate their stated commitment to ongoing reform in terms of accountability. The Queensland Police Service’s Annual Report 2009-2010 states a strong commitment to ethical conduct and accountability. It reports that under its strategic plan for 2008-12 one of its activities is, professional standards and ethical practice which described the activities the Service undertook to ensure it remained professional and accountable (Queensland Police Service, 2010, p.13). In addition, the Annual Report states that the organisational
values include professionalism. It states, “We provide quality policing services with integrity and accountability for outcomes” (Queensland Police Service, 2010, p.4). Similarly, the Victoria Police Annual Report 2009-2010 states an obligation to accountability. It details ‘professionalism’ as an organisational value which involves police to, “accept responsibility, be accountable to our customers and ourselves” (Victoria Police, 2010, p.5).

Another example is the New South Wales Police Corporate Plan 2004-2007 which states, “A very important part of our ongoing improvement program is to exercise transparent accountability – for all levels of NSW police. This accountability will cascade from the Commissioner down to the latest recruit and encompasses both sworn and non-sworn personnel” (NSWP, 2004, p.15). There are indications that at least some of this improvement plan is being successful. The NSW Ombudsman has the role of overseeing the effectiveness of the NSWP in handling and investigating complaints concerning police misconduct. Concerning the effectiveness of the NSWP in taking management action following a complaint against a police officer, the Ombudsman reported, “In the majority of cases we have agreed with police that the proposed management was appropriate and reasonable” (NSW Ombudsman, 2010, p.75). In terms of the NSWP Service investigation of serious police misconduct the Ombudsman observed, “The system continues to work well in relation to complaints about serious misconduct. In matters where disciplinary action was finalised this year, 95 officers had been charged with a total of 300 offences” (NSW Ombudsman, 2010, p.75).
The following discussion looks at the issue of community policing and in particular, the public commitment made by Australian police organisations to facilitate accountability to local communities through this mechanism.

2. Facilitating Accountability through Community Policing

_The use of community policing initiatives to facilitate police accountability_

Thus far, the discussion has concentrated on broad issues of accountability. The following discussion canvasses police organisations’ commitments to using community policing in attempts to improve accountability to local communities. It begins with defining the term ‘community policing’ and discusses its role in police accountability to communities. Literature which raises concerns regarding the effectiveness and practicality of community policing is examined. Also addressed is the issue whether community-policing initiatives can only succeed with the full commitment of police organisations. In addition, an example of a successful community-policing program is considered. In light of this, the discussion then turns to consider the public commitments made by Australian police organisations to facilitate accountability to their local communities via community policing.

The term ‘community policing’ is often linked with the word ‘partnership’. Hunter and Barker (2008) observed that community policing, “…seeks to form partnerships with the community to identify and arrest offenders, prevent crime and disorder, recognize and solve problems, and foster and maintain mutual respect and trust” (Hunter & Barker, 2008, p.191). Murray (2002) adds that the police “provide leadership and direction” (Murray, 2002, p.58) and Roberg et al., (1999, p.81) extend it to “power sharing” between police and citizens. Furthermore, Palmiotto and Kingshott (2010), argue that a requirement of community policing includes community members being
involved in the, “decision-making and policy making processes” (Palmiotto & Kingshott, 2010, p.43) of their local police. Roberg et al., (2005) expand upon concepts of partnership and consider that community policing must be based upon the “will of the community” (Roberg et al., 2005, p.83) in which police are required to take into account, “local norms and values and individual needs” (p.83). Additionally, Glaser and Denhardt (2009) consider that, “Community policing can be used to illuminate neighbourhood concerns and to focus investment of resources around the unique character associated with each neighbourhood” (Glaser & Denhardt, 2009, p.322).

All of these views are encapsulated in the detailed definition of community policing provided by Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1996) who comment:

Community Policing is a new philosophy of policing’ based on the concept that police officers and private citizens working together in creative ways can help solve contemporary community problems related to crime, fear of crime, social and physical disorder, and neighbourhood decay. The philosophy is predicated on the belief that achieving these goals requires that police departments develop a new relationship with the law-abiding people in the community, allowing them a greater voice in setting local police priorities and involving them in efforts to improve the overall quality of life in their neighbourhoods. It shifts the focus of police work from handling random calls to solving community problems (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1996, p.353).
Under the community policing model, police are required to be “accountable and transparent” (Brogden & Nijhar, 2005, p.24) and their work performance improves through, “increased cooperation and improved relationships between the public” (MacDonald, 2002, p.597). It can be argued that community policing facilitates accountability, as police are required to listen to the concerns of citizens regarding crime and fear of crime problems (Roberg et al., 1999; Skogan & Hartnett, 1997). Police are then obliged in partnership with local community members, to implement solutions in an attempt to address those problems. In addition, police are required to report back to citizens through community committees informing them of the success or otherwise of such efforts (Kappeler, 2005). Stevens (2002) sums up the relationship between community policing and accountability thus:

Like community policing itself, accountability will also become more and more geographically based. Police officers and their supervisors will have to answer for the results in a very defined geographic area for which they, and they alone are ultimately responsible (Stevens, 2002, p.44).

This is in contrast to the traditional style of policing model, where police take the lead role in the community to reduce crime, its associated fear and improve the quality of life (Palmiotto & Kingshott, 2010). Critics of this traditional style of policing argue that it concentrates predominantly upon the reduction of crime, with little thought to addressing underlying social issues (Brogden & Nijhar, 2005; Kerley & Benson, 2000).
Concerns regarding the effectiveness and practicality of community policing

Although community policing has been adopted throughout Australian police organisations there are concerns concerning its effectiveness and practicality. For instance, some theorists challenge the accuracy of the use of the word ‘community’ in the term ‘community policing’. Macintyre and Prenzler (1997) argue for example that there is a misconception in using the term ‘community policing’. Communities, they note, are made up of a number of different communities and subsequently the term ‘community policing’ is inaccurate as it “…ignores deep social divisions of class, gender, race and ethnicity” (Macintyre & Prenzler, 1997, p.36). In ignoring such divisions, vulnerable groups such as, “…the young, the socially disadvantaged, the unemployed, the homeless, racial minorities, the lower classes and women” (Macintyre & Prenzler, 1997, p.36) can be disadvantaged and as noted by Brogden and Nijhar (2005) excluded from community policing processes. Hawdon and Ryan (2003) observe that for a community to be considered as whole there needs to exist “…some elements of a symbolic culture and values must be shared” (Hawdon & Ryan, 2003, p.57). Not all so called ‘communities’ possess these required elements, indeed, few are likely to, given the diversity of people within post-industrial urban societies worldwide. Indeed NSWP patrols are not structured around identifiable communities, but, rather, are based upon geographic locations containing multiple communities (Hunter & Barker, 2008). The assumption that a general consensus exists amongst community members concerning crime matters (Hunter & Barker, 2008) is therefore likely to prove problematic.

Concerns have also been raised concerning the practicality of the community policing process. For instance, Chappell (2009) reported an American study she undertook
involving observations and interviews conducted with 54 officers. This author reported “…although most officers agreed with the philosophy of community policing, significant barriers, such as lack of resources prevented its full implementation in this agency” (Chappell, 2009, p. 5). In terms of the study’s findings, respondents felt, that there were not enough personnel to implement community policing initiatives. Another constraint identified by the study was lack of time. Chappell (2009) reported, “First, time constraints, as a result of responding to so many calls for service, were noted by officers as a reason why they do not practice community policing” (p. 17). Thirdly, organisational resistance was identified as an impediment to the successful implementation of community policing initiatives. Chappell (2009) commented, “Comments tended to relate to the lack of change in the organisational structure of the agency” (p. 18).

The importance of organisational commitment has been addressed by Segrave and Ratcliffe (2004) who observed, “Organisational level support is essential to community policing” (p.5) whilst Greene (1998) found that community policing initiatives could be adversely impacted upon by factors such as the police organisation’s culture. Lord and Friday (2008) found that, even though street police can possess an understanding of community policing, police management can still be faced with challenges to have police accept and practice its principles. Another influential factor for the success of community policing initiatives is the manner in which police organisations convey their messages of public commitment. Genuine intentions must be conveyed in a clear and open manner benefiting the public and the attitudes of police organisation employees alike (Murray, 2002).
Another concern regarding the effectiveness of community policing is its underlying assumption that community members wish to be involved in the community policing process. As highlighted by Hawdon and Ryan (2003) and Brogden and Nijhar (2005) the success of community policing initiatives is doubtful in poor and marginalised communities where many residents have a distrust of police. In fact, as argued by Flink (2002) and Steden, Caem and Boutellier (2011), in order for residents to want to actively participate in community policing initiatives such as community consultative committees they must feel that they belong to their community. Disadvantage ‘erodes’ this sense of community attachment (Flink, 2002). Furthermore, as argued by Steden et al., (2011) in terms of the participation of residents in community policing projects “…active participation tends to have a significant bias in favour of the white, middle aged, middle-class population” (p. 433). This has somewhat been supported by research conducted by Wehram and De Angelis (2011) who found that “…concentrated disadvantage in a community was negatively associated with a willingness to work with the police” (p. 62).

Yet another factor which impacts adversely upon community policing initiatives are problems associated with the availability of residents to participate in meetings (Herbert, 2009; Steden et al., 2011). In fact, Herbert (2009) argued that “Neighbourhood residents are often too busy to provide ongoing energy to communal crime reduction efforts, and neighbourhood groups are often too fractured or short-lived to accomplish long term transformations” (p. 85). Another impediment to successful community policing has been identified as being that police do not perceive community members as being their equals. For instance, Herbert (2009) claims that “…officers struggle to accept fully the notions that citizens are their co-equal partners”
(p. 87). This subsequently impacts adversely upon the required police-community partnership component which is essential for successful community policing.

In addition, there are also concerns about the community policing process being an effective mechanism in terms of facilitating police accountability to the community. For instance, Brogden and Nijhar (2005) argued that in practice the police at community meetings decide what issues are to be addressed and in doing so “…define the parameters of what matters are relevant to such community accountability” (p. 56). Schulenberg (2006) supports this proposition and argues that police “…successfully resist the idea that community forums are places where they can be called to task” (p. 139). In fact, Schulenberg (2006) states:

To presume that police-community forums will work to ensure citizen oversight of the police is a mistake; the evidence suggests otherwise. A more productive strategy would be to bolster formal mechanisms of civilian oversight, such as civilian review boards. (Schulenberg, 2006, p. 139).

Also, as discussed by Liederbach, Fritsch, Carter and Bannister (2007), community policing initiatives can be adversely impacted upon by differing views between police and community members as to what specific crime problems should be addressed.
Notwithstanding the aforementioned concerns regarding the effectiveness and practicability of community policing, research has also provided examples of successful community policing programs implemented by police organisations. One such study involved the Pasadena Police Department and was conducted by the Police Assessment Resource Centre and the Vera Institute of Justice (PARC/VERA). This study surveyed 241 serving police officers and 1,500 Pasadena residents to capture their views concerning police-community relations and attitudes (PARC/VERA, 2006, p. 9). It was set against the backdrop that Pasadena Police had recently implemented a number of community policing initiatives such as a juvenile diversion program, the Homeless Outreach Psychiatric Evaluation Team, a program to mediate certain types of public complaints and police-community dialogue forums. In addition, a service area policing program was implemented; the aim of which involved “…building community partnerships and developing community-based problem solving strategies” (PARC/VERA, 2006, p. 18).

Overall, PARC/VERA (2006) discovered that the Pasadena police ‘…has embraced community policing and committed itself to reducing crime as well as improving police-community relations’ (p.1). With regard to the impact of the community policing program upon officer’s attitudes the study found that there was an increase in “…job satisfaction and positive attitudes towards the community” (PARC/VERA, 2006, p. 93). In terms of the local community the study reported that “…Pasadena residents as a whole reported high rates of satisfaction with their contacts with police and have positive perceptions of police effectiveness” (PARC/VERA, 2006, p. 3).
The commitment of Australian police organisations concerning accountability and community policing

In recent times, Australian police organisations through annual reports and mission statements have articulated reform initiatives to increase their accountability through community policing practices. A review of Australian police organisations’ annual reports suggests that community policing has been adopted in police rhetoric and current ‘management speak’. For instance the Queensland Police Service Annual Report (2009-2010) outlined that it embraces, “partnerships” (p.4) in which the Police Service strives to, “engage communities and work collaboratively to provide policing services” (p.4). The Annual Report also states that community expectations are met through a, “corporate governance framework” (p.18) which ensures that, “operations and support activities are directed, managed and accountable” (Queensland Police Service, 2010, p.18).

The South Australia Police Annual Report (2009-2010) also makes reference to community policing principles in conveying it’s commitment to the community. It mentions:

SAPOL recognises the importance of the community having trust and confidence in their policing service. The new Future Directions strategy 2010-13 is aimed at building community confidence in police and positive community engagement by being responsive to local issues that cause the community most concern (South Australia Police, 2010, p.15).
The Northern Territory Police has also adopted community policing ‘speak’ in their 2009-2010 Annual Report by mentioning that, “The NTPFES mission underpins our role to protect the community by working together and developing partnerships with other agencies and the community” (Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services 2010, p.10). The Western Australia Police Annual Report (2008-2009) also utilised community policing terminology stating that one of its key priorities is, “Community Engagement – strive to develop a better understanding of communities to ensure service provision is appropriate to their needs, to assist with crime and victimisation reduction, and intelligence-gathering” (Western Australia Police Service, 2009, p.5).

In addition, the Victoria Police Annual Report (2009-2010) also utilises community policing ‘speak’ in articulating its commitment to the community. It states:

Victoria Police recognises that the community are at the centre of everything we do and that it relies heavily on the support it receives from the community in order to deliver effective policing. It is essential therefore, that the community has confidence in us to perform our role, and that they know we will always demonstrate the highest standards of professionalism and ethical behaviour. Victoria Police works closely with the community, helping those in need of assistance and connecting them with others who can provide ongoing support (Victoria Police, 2010, p.22).

The NSWP Annual Report (2009-2010) has also made reference to community policing principles within its corporate plan for 2008-2012. This includes the strategy of “Increased Community Confidence in Police” (p.16) which is to be achieved in part
through collaboration “with community and partners” (NSWP Force Annual Report 2009-10, p.16).

The NSWP has also implemented Police Accountability Community Teams (PACTs). These teams consist of representatives from the local police command and various community groups and their objectives are to “Ensure Local Area Commanders are accountable to their local communities; Encourage community partnerships to reduce crime and the fear of crime; Develop local solutions to local crime in partnership with local stakeholders” (New South Wales Police, 2004, p.1).

The aforementioned objectives are facilitated through regular meetings attended by the representatives of various groups within the local community, working as equals on crime prevention measures (Johnston, Mukerjee and Sharma, 2002). Whilst, on face value, it would appear that Police Accountability Community Teams are an ideal mechanism to address local community crime problems, concern does exist that these mechanisms are not effective in achieving their goals of effective community consultation (Dixon, 1999).

In regards to NSWP, Dixon (1999) and Walter (2005) expressed concerns that the Police Accountability Community Teams which arose from the 1996 Wood Royal Commission had been modelled loosely upon community consultative committees existing in England. They highlighted the English system’s inadequacies in commenting that it was a “…source of frustration because it involves no redistribution of power” (Dixon, 1999, p.155). Dixon further argued that the structure of consultative committees failed to reflect the interests of all groups contained within a community;
rather the committee’s membership was drawn from specific powerful community
groups. Walter (2005) expressed concern regarding deficiencies in community
meetings. Walter found that “…in the period 2002-2004 only 52% had set agendas for
meetings. Furthermore, 70% had meeting reports but only 58% of the total had
reported on a meeting in 2004” (Walter, 2005, P.113). Moreover, “…a mere 43% had
both set agendas and reported on meetings” (Walter, 2005, p.114). Walter argued that
this adversely impacted upon the flow of information from the police to community
members, which meant that police controlled the type and extent of information, thus
alienating “communities from local policing” (Walter, 2005, p.148).

Community policing is clearly being taken up across Australia by the various police
organisations in an attempt to increase accountability to communities. It is possible that
flaws both at a conceptual and practical level mean that this desired accountability
process functions, at best, partially, and, at worst, not at all.

**The importance of public support for the effective implementation of
community policing and the policing role in general**

Public support is an essential component, not just to the success of community policing
initiatives, but for the policing role in general. The concept of community policing is
driven by an underlying ideology of the formation of partnerships between police and
local community members. These partnerships are primarily formed in attempts to
solve identified crime problems and related fear of crime issues. It will be argued
though, that for this and other policing roles (such as the arrest of offenders) to be
commented, “…two central tenets of community policing are that the police should
work in cooperation with, and earn the trust of, the community” (Hawdon & Ryan, 2003, p.57). Without trust and reciprocity, community policing, like fighting crime, will not succeed (Lynch & Patterson, 1991; Reisig & Lloyd, 2009; Roberg et al., 2005).

Public support is not only necessary for community policing and the fighting of crime. In order for police to function effectively at all, the vast majority of the population must accept the authority and subsequently the decisions of police (Harris, 2009; Reiner, 1992). This goes down to the local level: Tyler (2000) observed that police authority and decisions are supported by the public when, “Police can gain deference because they are viewed as following professional rules of conduct and uniform procedures, or particular police officers can be respected and known in their communities and can through these personalized connections gain deference” (Tyler, 2000, p.122).

Having discussed the need for public support for community policing initiatives and other policing roles, the review of literature turns to a discussion of factors which can adversely impact upon such support.
3. Factors Impacting upon Public Support and the Success of Community Policing Initiatives

The effect of police misconduct

Given the need for public support, what might be the impact of police misconduct and disrespect on public opinion and support? The major issue here is that an individual’s level of satisfaction arising from a police encounter can influence their satisfaction in future encounters with police (Brandl, Frank, Worden & Bynum, 1994). For instance, research undertaken by Brandl et al., (1994) involving surveys administered to 398 respondents residing in a large Midwestern city in the United States discovered that an individual’s level of satisfaction in their interaction with police could be influenced by previous dealings with police. In other words, if a community member perceived that they were not treated properly in a previous encounter with police this could adversely influence their perceptions and subsequent level of satisfaction in future encounters. In contrast, if an individual perceived earlier encounters with police to be reasonable this may well positively influence their attitudes concerning any future police encounters.

Weitzer (2000) reported the results of interviews conducted with 169 residents in three different neighbourhoods in Washington DC. He found that the way in which police performed their duties and their interactions with the public could be determining factors concerning citizens’ opinions of police. The importance of police conduct whilst dealing with members of the public is also supported through research conducted by Reisig and Chandeck (2001) in a Midwestern city in the United States. The researchers surveyed 211 citizens who had recent voluntary encounters with police and 379 respondents whose recent encounters with police were deemed involuntary. They discovered that, “The level of service an individual received was correlated with levels
of satisfaction with the way police handled the encounter” (Reisig & Chandeck, 2001, p.95).

Turning to the impact which police misconduct and disrespect may have upon local communities, many researchers have recognised the problematic nature of such conduct. As previously mentioned, in order for police to effectively carry out their policing roles the support of the public must exist. Police misconduct and disrespect diminishes this support and in some cases completely removes it. For example, survey research conducted in Leeds by Jefferson (1991) discovered that, of all the racial groups surveyed, blacks voiced the highest disapproval rating for police. In articulating the reasons for their disapproval, the respondents referred to their perceptions of police misconduct and disrespect. Jefferson also commented about the impact which unpleasant experiences with police have upon individuals’ global attitudes to police in general. He observed, “…those having most negative contacts with police - young blacks - have the most hostile attitudes, and that these are often very critical indeed” (Jefferson, 1991, p.187).

In addition, Weitzer and Tuch (2002) carried out a survey involving 1864 participants in the United States. The findings indicated that an individuals’ negative experience with police including experiences where police have initiated contact can adversely impact upon an individual’s attitudes towards police. Survey research conducted by Wu, Sun and Triplett (2009) involving 1,963 residents from 66 neighbourhoods within the United States revealed not only was an individual’s negative experience with police significant in terms of their evaluation of local police but an individual’s evaluation of local police “performance” (p.150) could also be influenced by the police interactions
experienced by an immediate family member. Furthermore, survey and in-depth interview research of 45 participants conducted by Gau and Brunson (2010) highlighted that individuals mistreated by police in previous encounters may in future encounters not cooperate with police. Misconduct, and disrespect, then, have ripple effects at individual and community levels (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003). This is significant, as community policing initiatives involve a joint effort from police and the local community, and if this community support is absent the community policing efforts are subsequently compromised (Smith, Graham & Adams, 1991).

In contrast, researchers have found that, if individuals consider that police have treated them in a fair and respectful manner, they are more likely to be satisfied (Brandl & Horvath, 1991; Sced, 2004). In fact, Lasley, Vernon and Dery (1995), in considering factors that impact upon the success of community policing initiatives, observe that the most important contributing factor is the quality of the interaction between the police officer and the individual. Bradley (1998) contended that for police to be able to work well with various community groups police must:

(i) Provide an equal quality of services to them, responding to the varying intensity and nature of their needs and requirements. (ii) Demonstrate a depth of understanding of varying social situations and service needs. (iii) Treat them with due civility and respect and (iv) Recognize the key supporting role played by that particular group in solving crime and maintaining quality of life (Bradley, 1998, p.13).

Furthermore, Herbert (2006); Hinds (2007) and Murphy, Hinds and Fleming (2008) draw a link between police legitimacy within a community and police using procedural justice during their daily interactions with community members. Procedural justice is
related to an individual’s perception that they have been dealt with by police in a fair manner which, in turn, enhances an individual’s willingness to cooperate with police. Murphy et al., (2008) define procedural justice as, “…the perceived fairness of the procedures involved in decision-making and implementation, and the treatment people receive from the authority” (Murphy et al., 2008, p.139). However, as pointed out by Gau and Brunson (2010), aggressive tactics undertaken by police, such as the widespread use of stop and search powers, “can compromise procedural justice and therefore undermine police legitimacy” (Gau & Brunson, 2010, p.273). Tyler (2011) in highlighting the importance of police legitimacy within a community stated:

The police need to view as a key concern public judgements about how they are exercising their authority when policing. They need to focus upon how people evaluate the police and police actions. Why? Because public view shape how people behave in reaction to the police (Tyler, 2011, p.263).

Given that police misconduct can impact unfavourably upon community members’ attitudes towards police and thus on community policing, the following review examines the issue of communities suffering from social disorganisation, and whether this is another factor which might influence communities’ attitudes towards police.

**The negative impact of social disorganisation upon community attitudes towards police and subsequent support for community policing initiatives**

Interest in social disorganisation theory began in 1942 with the seminal work of Shaw and McKay (1942). This research argued that communities which contained certain social characteristics, such as residential instability and poverty, possessed higher frequencies of delinquency. Succeeding research has considered that Shaw and
McKay’s (1942) findings failed to establish a substantive connection between economic disadvantage and rates of delinquency (Bursik & Grasmick, 1993). Though, notwithstanding, social disorganisation theory has further developed to include the factors of family disruption, such as divorce and single parent households, as structural characteristics of socially disorganised communities (Sampson & Groves, 1989). Research conducted by Sampson and Groves (1989), concerning various communities within Great Britain, discovered there was a causal connection between communities suffering from delinquency and high crime rates and socially disorganised characteristics, such as “sparse friendship networks, unsupervised teenage peer groups and low organizational participation” (Sampson & Groves, 1989, p.799). In addition, an American study conducted by Krivo and Peterson (1996) revealed that “…extreme disadvantage is uniquely consequential in producing the very heightened levels of criminality found in some inner-city neighbourhoods” (Krivo & Peterson, 1996, p.642).

Research also suggests that social conditions such as poverty, residential mobility and unemployment can impact upon residents’ satisfaction and subsequent cooperation with police. In regards to the relationship between the socio economic status of individuals and attitudes towards police, research in general concludes that respondents from lower socio economic groups express less satisfaction with police (Albrecht & Green, 1977; Huang & Vaughn, 1996; Sampson & Bartusch, 1998). Findings of such research suggest that the attitudes of lower socio economic status persons are intertwined with negative attitudes towards the political and judicial process (Albrecht & Green, 1977) and cynicism about legal systems of justice (Sampson & Bartusch, 1998). Additionally, a study conducted by the Queensland Crime and Misconduct Commission (2003) found that unemployed respondents expressed the greatest belief
that police failed to conduct themselves properly. Unemployed respondents were also less likely to agree to the proposition that “most police are honest” (p.9).

More recent research has shaped the theory of social disorganisation around the concept that some communities, as a result of possessing various social characteristics (such as high levels of unemployment), have their ability to informally control the anti-social and criminal behaviour of community members impeded (Taylor & Covington, 1993). Kubrin and Weitzer (2003) have described the theory of social disorganisation in the following terms:

Social disorganization refers to the inability of a community to realize common goals and solve chronic problems. According to the theory, poverty, residential mobility, ethnic heterogeneity, and weak social networks decrease a neighbourhood’s capacity to control the behaviour of people in public, and hence increase the likelihood of crime (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003, p.374).

Research has also identified that the absence, or reduction of social control structures, which assist in controlling crime, may be contributing factors to the formation of socially disorganised communities. For instance, Bursik and Grasmick (1993) and Krivo and Peterson (1996) argued that, in disadvantaged communities, social control may be adversely impacted upon because of a lack of police resources. In terms of this present study, to determine whether socially disorganised communities can impact adversely upon police officers’ perceptions of accountability, the possible relationship between reduced or absent formal social mechanisms, such as policing and social disorganisation, is important. It could be that, not only does the level of formal social control mechanisms, such as police, impact upon the formation of socially disorganised communities, but that socially disorganised communities themselves impact adversely
upon police perceptions of accountability, subsequently diminishing the quality of police service and, thereby, exacerbating the social disorganisation problem within the particular community.

In terms of neighbourhood disorder, research suggests this too can adversely influence some residents’ attitudes towards police. Cao, Frank and Cullen (1996) for instance, provide examples of neighbourhood disorder as including “noisy neighbours, loitering by rowdy teenagers and physical disorder such as graffiti, deteriorating property” (p.4). Their ensuing research discovered that communities suffering from neighbourhood disorder negatively impacted upon residents’ confidence in police. The primary reason cited for this loss of confidence was respondents’ perceptions that police are responsible for addressing the problem of neighbourhood disorder as the “government’s first-line representative” (Cao, et al., 1996, p.13). In more recent studies the Home Office (2004), Reisig and Parks (2000) and Sprott and Doob (2009) identified that, a causal nexus could be drawn between an individual’s perception of the condition of their neighbourhood and their opinions of police. In other words, the poor physical condition of a neighbourhood or its heightened level of criminal activity could negatively impact upon some residents’ attitudes towards police. These findings have also found support in research conducted by Xu, Fielder and Flaming (2005) who ascertained than an individuals’ satisfaction with police “is dependant upon the level of citizens fear and the perceived quality of life in the community” (Xu, et al., 2005, p.174).

Research also suggests that another structural characteristic of socially disorganised communities, the absence of ‘collective efficacy’, impacts unfavourably upon residents’ attitudes towards police. In their seminal work Sampson, Raudenbush and
Earl (1997) introduced the concept of ‘collective efficacy’. This was defined as “social cohesion among neighbours combined with their willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good” (p.918) which, in turn, the authors considered, “is linked to reduced violence” (p.918). This definition has been later expanded upon to include “…the trustworthiness of neighbours and their willingness to intervene as informal social control agents” (Gibson, Zhao, Lovrich & Gaffney, 2002, p.537). A number of research studies have also established a relationship between communities suffering from concentrated disadvantage and low levels of collective efficacy (Nolan et al., 2004; Sampson, 2004; Sampson et al., 1997). In addition, some theorists argue that if an individual perceives that their neighbourhood is inflicted by social disorder then this can impact unfavourably upon their perceptions of their neighbourhood’s collective efficacy (Gibson, et al., 2002).

Whilst the literature suggests the existence of an underlying connection between a community’s social characteristics and levels of collective efficacy, research also suggests that a community’s level of collective efficacy may influence attitudes towards police (Nolan et al., 2004). In addition, research conducted by Maxson, Hennigan and Sloane (2002) explored the impact of low collective efficacy and its influence upon residents’ attitudes towards, and confidence in, police. Results of the study indicated, “…the functionality of a neighbourhood is closely aligned with opinions of police” (p.11). Maxson et al., also found that “communities possessing high collective efficacy possessed a greater job approval for their local police than communities possessing low collective efficacy” (Maxson et al., 2002, p.11).
It could be argued that the aforementioned review of literature touching upon factors that influence individual’s attitudes towards police highlights the notion that police organisations’ attempt to facilitate accountability through community policing initiatives may by itself not be enough. This issue has been highlighted by research undertaken by Grinc (1994) which entailed interviews and focus groups involving 552 participants, including police and citizens in eight police jurisdictions across the United States. The research found that within poor socially disorganised communities even the ‘good’ law abiding residents may not wish to have any involvement in community policing initiatives (Grinc, 1994). The reasons provided for such reluctance include, “…the poor relationship between the police and residents in poor, minority communities that historically have borne the brunt of police abuses” (Grinc, 1994, p.464).

Having considered factors, which may adversely impact upon community members’ attitudes and subsequent support for community policing initiatives, the review now turns to explore factors, which may adversely influence the attitudes and perceptions of police. The review commences reviewing literature which suggests that police recruits enter their training with noble intentions. Unfortunately, this in time is eroded by socialisation into the negative features of the police occupational culture, the unconstructive experiences associated with operational policing and the detrimental impact of communities suffering from social disorganisation.
4. Factors Adversely Impacting Upon the Noble Intentions of Police Recruits Leading to Negative Attitudes and Conduct in their Policing Role and a Resultant Decline of Services to the Community.

The noble intentions of policing students and the positive impact of academy training

Even prior to commencing their training recruits have preconceived ideas of what their future policing role will be (Fielding, 1988). Termed 'anticipatory socialisation', this is an influential stage for students in establishing their identity as police officers. Maghan (1988) mentions that anticipatory socialisation is a process whereby a person acquires expectations and attitudes concerning their future policing role. Research suggests that students enter their police training with selfless motives, such as serving the community (Van Maanen, 1973) and intentions of performing good deeds for society (Sherman, 1991). Research conducted by Meagher and Yentes (1986) found that women and men choose a career in law enforcement for similar reasons “…to help people and the security of the job” (Meagher & Yentes, 1986, p.324).

Research also indicates that policing students’ altruistic attitudes prior to the commencement of their training are in fact enhanced during their initial police training. Wortley's (1992) study found that academy training did have a positive impact upon the attitudes of students. He found that academy training was quite successful in producing police who were not 'stereotypically authoritarian' and, that upon completion of academy training, were more adaptable in their understanding of the causes of crime.
and in some regards less punitive. In another study, Chan, Doran and Devery (1999) conducted research to analyse the experiences of a cohort of policing recruits during their first two years of service with the NSWP. The study focused upon the processes involved in the development of police professionalism and the factors that influenced police practice. The authors found that the academy was fairly successful in raising students’ consciousness concerning ethics. This was achieved in part by making the students aware of such social issues as sexual and racial stereotypes.

On face value it would appear that as policing students enter training with noble intentions of serving the community, and this is enhanced through training, then these high levels of organisational values should continue beyond the academy and throughout the recruits’ policing careers. However, research would indicate that this does not occur; rather the new police are socialised into the positive and negative characteristics of the police culture.

**Attitudes and conduct of police towards local communities affected by socialisation of police recruits to the negative aspects of the police culture and the unconstructive experiences associated with operational policing**

Whilst academy training appears to assist students internalise organisational values, once they commence duties at a police station the new recruits are then socialised into the positive and negative features of the police occupational culture, and are also exposed to negative experiences with criminals and other police 'clients'. Firstly, in considering the socialisation of recruits in the police culture, it has been observed that socialisation is a common factor in every occupation as it is a learning process for the new members. Its function is to ensure that those new members adopt the attitudes,
prevailing rules and values of their senior colleagues in the workplace (Sherman, 1991). Christie, Petrie and Timmins (1996) describe organisational socialisation as a:

…process by which newcomers become full members of organizations or groups. It involves not only learning and adopting new behaviours, skills, and abilities pertaining to the role, but also adjusting to the groups’ norms and values, which are absorbed by the process of socialization (Christie et al., 1996, p.300).

In addition, Lundman (1980, p.73) considers that “socialization is the process whereby individuals learn the values and behaviour patterns of a group.” In regards to the socialisation of police recruits, they experience a combination of informal and formal socialisation (Stradling, Crowe & Tuohy, 1993). This consists of new police being inducted into the values, attitudes, role requirements and expectations which experienced officers consider appropriate for police group membership (Ellis, 1991). Lundman (1980, p.73) supports this proposition, mentioning that police socialisation involves recruits learning “the values and behaviour patterns characteristic of experienced police officers.” In addition, Havassy (1997) observes that the "socialisation of young officers into the police culture begins early and continues throughout their careers. It is a powerful force in shaping attitudes and behaviour” (p.30).

However, research also indicates that the socialisation of police recruits into the police culture erodes the positive gains which academy training had upon their attitudes. As highlighted by Prenzler (2009) “within a short time, personal moral standards are deeply compromised” (p.25). Research conducted by Chan, Devery and Doran (2003)
and Haar (2001) have also alluded to the problem of the decline of recruits’ ethical values once they commence working at police stations. In fact, Haar's (2001) study found that by the end of the first year of work police recruits held more negative attitudes towards areas of community policing and problem solving policing. The study found that attitudes of co-workers were a significant contributing factor in the formation of the attitudes of new police officers. Furthermore, field training experience and exposure to the policing environment did not reinforce the positive influence of academy training upon recruits (Haar, 2001).

In addition, Ellis's (1991) study of the socialisation of police recruits into the police culture showed that as recruits progressed in their policing career they developed a sense of alienation towards the general community. Ellis found that the number of recruits who disagreed with the statement "I trust most members of the public" was eighteen percent, whilst the response of experienced constables to the same question was thirty four percent. The author concluded:

It is apparent that new police recruits bring a fairly consistent set of attitudes, beliefs and values concerning policing with them as they approach and enter a policing career. It is also apparent that these attitudes undergo change in a consistent fashion - police develop a sense of alienation and cynicism concerning their role and place in society (Ellis, 1991, p.116).

The above mentioned study has also found support in Australian research conducted by Christie et al., (1996). This research surveyed 287 Queensland police recruits. The authors found that, “…it seems that exposure to policing renders new recruits more
conservative irrespective of their pre-existing level of conservatism. This is so, despite the attempt to liberalise attitudes through education” (Christie et al., 1996, p.312).

Further study into the difference of attitudes between new recruits and experienced police officers was conducted by McConkey, Huon and Frank (1996). This study examined attitudes of recruits and police officers who were provided with scenarios involving breaches of ethical conduct. The study found that recruits rated serious breaches of ethical conduct far more seriously than did police officers. McConkey et al. (1996) concluded that most of an officers' training occurs on the street under the guidance of experienced officers. However, the attitudes and behaviours of the veterans can differ from or even contradict academy training. The authors commented, “Policing as an occupation might therefore be regarded as a subculture, the values, attitudes and ethos of which are reinforced by the socialisation of its recruits” (McConkey et al., 1996, p.1).

In regards to another survey involving attitudes of police, Ede and Legosz (2002) reported the findings of surveys administered to Queensland Police Service recruits, first year constables and experienced police. The participants were presented with hypothetical scenarios of unethical conduct and were asked to articulate their views concerning the perceived seriousness of the scenarios. Ede and Legosz examined the results of the surveys in regards to participants' desire to pursue official action and their reluctance to act. Results indicated that recruits considered the ethical breaches depicted within the scenarios as far more serious than the first year constables, whereas the first year constables rated the scenarios more serious than the more experienced police participants. The authors stated, “The data presented here suggest that elements
of a code of silence exist to at least some extent in the QPS and that new members of the Service may be quickly socialised into the informal code” (Ede & Legosz, 2002, p.4).

In regards to certain aspects of the police work environment having a negative impact upon the attitudes of police, this has been touched upon by academics such as Wortley (1992). His study discovered that the initial positive influence of training upon recruits’ values was overturned once they commenced duties. The author found that the police occupation was a contributor to the erosion of recruits’ values. Furthermore, once exposed to the working environment of a police station, new police became more authoritarian, punitive and prejudiced in their attitudes (Wortley, 1992). This finding is also supported by Prenzler (1997) who observes, “Changes in attitude may be a direct result of experience with crime, criminals or hostile groups, rather than from experience with other police” (Prenzler, 1997, p.51). Also, as highlighted by Skolnick and Fyfe (1993) police as enforcers of the law often come in contact with certain types of people. The authors state, “…police often encounter those who are unstable, ill-dressed, pugnacious, and threatening”(p.95).

The review of literature now turns to the issue of communities suffering from social disorganisation and considers whether this factor can also adversely impact upon police misconduct and attitudes of victim deservedness which in turn impedes community policing initiatives to facilitate police accountability.
The detrimental impact of socially disorganised communities upon police misconduct and attitudes of victim deservedness

The notion that police behaviour and conduct can vary depending upon the predominant social status of residents where the police perform their duties has been examined by such writers as Smith (1986), Terrill and Reisig (2003) and Sun et al., (2008). Specifically, research suggests that suspects approached by police in lower status neighbourhoods have a greater likelihood of being arrested than suspects in a neighbourhood of a higher status (Smith, 1986). In addition, research conducted by Terrill and Reisig (2003) involving surveys and observations of 305 Indianapolis and St Petersburg police officers and 3,544 interactions with suspects, found that police are more likely to use increased levels of force against suspects in neighbourhoods suffering from disadvantage. This finding has also been supported in research undertaken by Lawton (2007) which examined ‘use of force’ reports submitted by Philadelphia police during 2002. The author argued that the results of his study and that of Terrill and Reisig (2003), “…both support the idea that place matters” (Lawton, 2007, p.180). The author further stated, “…further research into levels of police force must consider locations as a necessary measure toward understanding the outcome of police-citizen interactions” (Lawton, 2007, p.180). In addition, more recent research conducted by Lee, Jang, Yun, Lim and Tushaus (2010) involving 8,798 arrest reports from eight American police agencies found that, “…unemployment rates showed a positive and statistically significant impact on police use of higher levels of force.” (Lee et al., 2010, p.695). Also, an American study conducted by Sorensen, Marquart and Brock (1993) found that disadvantaged neighbourhoods contained a “higher rate of police killing felon” (p.438), whilst Ingram (2007) found a relationship between the type of neighbourhood in which police performed their duties and the number of traffic
citations issued to residents. Ingram (2007, p.388) stated, “…levels of disorganisation, disadvantage, violent crime, and racial composition in neighbourhoods were all significant predictors of the number of citations issued, independent of the characteristics of the encounter” (Ingram, 2007, p.388).

Researchers have also identified that certain groups of people are more likely to be the recipients of police use of coercive force. For instance, Terrill and Mastrofski (2006) found that, “Males, nonwhites, poor suspects and young suspects were all treated more harshly irrespective of their behaviour” (p.243). Whilst Sun et al., (2008) stated, “The findings suggested that males, minorities and poor citizens were more likely to be subjected to coercive activities than were females, non minorities and affluent citizens” (Sun et al., 2008, p.29).

Other research which supports the notion of inconsistent police behaviour across communities includes Alpert, Dunham and MacDonald’s (2004) study which found suspects appearing to possess less authority were subjected to greater police use of force compared to suspects of a higher perceived status. Research also suggests that police are less vigorous in attending to complaints of non violent minor crime in low status neighbourhoods when compared to similar crime being reported in higher status areas (Klinger, 1997; Stark, 1987). Also, research indicates that individuals residing in neighborhoods suffering from social disadvantage experience greater police disrespect (Mastrofski, Reisig & McCluskey, 2002) and higher rates of police misconduct (Kane, 2002; Mastrofski, Reisig & McCluskey, 2002).
In searching for explanations to account for variances in police conduct across communities, researchers have discovered that the social and physical characteristics which contribute to the formation of socially disorganised neighbourhoods can impact adversely upon the professional conduct of police. For instance, some writers consider that physical characteristics such as graffiti, the poor condition of properties and overall poverty of the location can impact upon police perceptions of increased deviance (Herbert, 1997). Furthermore, Stark (1987) in attempting to “codify” (p.893) research concerning “deviant places” (p.893), discussed that perceptions of increased deviance can adversely impact upon police views of ‘victim deservedness’. Klinger (1997) also discussed this issue and observed, “Because the police mandate to regulate deviance is a mandate to protect the conventional citizenry, officers will view victims who precipitate their victimization and victims who are criminals in other contexts as undeserving” (Klinger, 1997, p.291).

Another possible contributing factor to poor police conduct in socially disorganised neighbourhoods is the high crime rates which are characteristic of such communities. Worden (1996) examined theories of police behaviour in light of research concerning police use of force. He concluded that police who perform duties in high crime areas where force is regularly used may develop negative attitudes towards residents. This has somewhat been supported by Sobol (2010), who found a relationship between high rates of crime and increased police cynicism regarding community members. Also, Terrill and Reisig (2003) found that police in high crime areas were more likely to resort to increased levels of force due to the perception that it constituted normal practice. The authors commented, “Officers may simply be more likely to resort to force because this is the manner in which conflict is resolved in these types of
neighbourhoods” (Terrill & Reisig, 2003, p.308). The authors also proposed that police working in high crime areas may perceive higher levels of danger and thereby resort to higher levels of force. Furthermore, as suggested by Lersch, Bazley, Mieczkowski and Childs (2008), resorting to increased levels of force in high crime neighbourhoods may produce amongst police feelings of “resentment” and frustration towards residents (p.296) for their, “complete dependence upon the police for social control” (Lersch et al., 2008, p.296).

Yet another possible explanation, put forward by theorists concerning increased levels of police misconduct in socially disorganised communities, is the negative attitudes of residents towards police impacting unfavourably upon police attitudes. For example, Herbert (1997) expressed the view that police identify some locations as being against police and subsequently view suspects more suspiciously within these locations and would “respond aggressively to challenges to their authority”(p.21). Also, research conducted by Smith Graham and Adams (1991) involving the surveying of 1,116 officers from 60 patrols in the United States found that police working in neighbourhoods afflicted by poverty and high crime rates perceived greater resident disrespect. This is relevant in light of research conducted by McElvain and Kposowa (2004) which reviewed 307 ‘use of force’ investigations involving 409 police officers throughout California. The authors found that:

…by far the strongest predictor of investigations for alleged use of force was departmental experience. Based on the analysis, a typical officer that was investigated for alleged uses of force was a young male with less than ten years experience (McElvain & Kposowa, 2004, p.275).
The authors found that perceived citizen disrespect impacted unfavourably upon the professional conduct of young inexperienced police. Furthermore, less experienced police were not good at handling perceived disrespect from members of the community and would respond to perceived disrespect in an aggressive manner (McElvain & Kposowa, 2004).

Having reviewed literature concerning the possible relationship between socially disorganised communities and possible police misconduct and decline in service to the community, attention is now drawn to identifying gaps in current literature concerning police perceptions of accountability being impacted upon by the performance of duties within socially disorganised communities.

5. Social Disorganisation and Police Perceptions of Accountability

_Police perceptions of accountability influenced by the local communities in which they police_

This review considers a key gap in the current literature pertaining to socially disorganised communities and their possible influence upon police perceptions of accountability. Whilst the literature reviewed suggests a possible causal relationship between social disorganisation and police misconduct, the associated research fails to address the interaction between such communities and police perceptions of accountability. In particular, there would appear to be a gap in literature concerning whether police perceptions of accountability are influenced by the type of community which they serve, and, if this exists, whether the standard of police service also fluctuates.

examining FBI records regarding the police killing of 4,419 felons in the United States during 1976 to 1988.

It is suggested that, whilst the above research provided evidence of the adverse impact of socially disorganised communities upon police attitudes, professionalism and conduct, it failed to glean from police their perceptions of the levels of their accountability whilst working within those socially disorganised communities. It is noted though, that research conducted by Sobol (2010) and Terrill and Reisig (2003) did seek police participants’ views concerning various aspects of policing disorganised communities. Sobol’s (2010) study drew upon observations of police encounters with suspects in the Indianapolis, Indiana, St Petersburg and Florida patrols during the period 1996 to 1997. In addition, 574 officers were surveyed to seek their views concerning, “problem-solving, community policing, and perceived neighbourhood problems and their views of citizens, training, and perceived priorities of the department” (Sobol, 2010, p.256). Terrill and Reisig’s (2003) study involved the analysis of data collected as part of the Project on Policing Neighborhoods Project during the period 1996 and 1997, in which 305 police were observed during 3,544 encounters with suspects. Police participants were also asked questions to discover their views concerning crime fighting orientation, distrust and legal restraints.

It is noted however, that whilst the studies conducted by Sobol (2010) and Terrill and Reisig (2003) did include interviews with police, they did not canvass police perceptions of their levels of their accountability. In fact, Terrill and Reisig (2003) suggested that future research, “…should continue to examine the role of neighbourhood context on police use of force. Such an effort might begin with a better
understanding of officers’ views toward neighbourhoods and how such views may prompt their decision making behaviour” (Terrill & Reisig, 2003, p.309).

Also, Sobol (2010) stated that, in light of his study’s finding concerning a link between officers’ cynicism of residents and the rate of crime within a district, future research should examine, “…the district ecological forces that shape the work that police perform and whether police attitudes are the mechanisms through which police behaviour varies” (Sobol, 2010, p.264).

It is suggested that addressing this gap in the literature could be significant in terms of the commitment of Australian police organisations to be more accountable to local communities. If police perceptions of accountability do fluctuate across communities, it is conceivable that a corresponding inconsistency in the quality of police service also occurs, thereby adversely impacting upon a police organisation’s accountability initiatives. It is also suggested that evidence exists in at least one Australian socially disorganised community, Macquarie Fields, of residents’ dissatisfaction with the attitudes and conduct of local police. This suburb has been described by Dobson (2005) in the following terms, “Macquarie Fields is relatively isolated from the rest of the Sydney metropolitan area, public housing predominates and the locality scores high on the usual indicators of social and economic disadvantage” (p.133). As outlined in the introduction of this thesis, in March 2005, riots involving local youth against police took place in Macquarie Fields following the death of two local teenagers who were involved in a police pursuit. Subsequent media attention was drawn to various social problems being experienced by this community. One such problem was evidence of police intimidation and harassment. Local residents voiced their dissatisfaction
concerning local police conduct to the media. For example, Das (2005) from The Age newspaper and Morgan (2005) a columnist from the Financial Review reported that there had been hostility towards police by residents of Macquarie Fields for an ongoing period. Then too, Totaro and Connolly (2005) from the Sydney Morning Herald reported that local residents of Macquarie Fields said they had experienced ongoing harassment and intimidation by police.

These Macquarie Fields experiences would appear to be in contrast with Australian Policing surveys that suggest Australian citizens are mostly satisfied with services provided by police. For instance, the Australasian Centre for Policing Research (2004) published a national survey of community satisfaction with policing. The results indicated that, in police contacts with citizens, “approximately 87 percent of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the service they received during their most recent police-initiated contact” (ACPR, 2004, p.8). In terms of self-initiated contacts with police, the Australasian Centre for Policing research (2004) revealed, after conducting a national survey into satisfaction with police, that “Approximately three quarters of respondents were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the service they received during their most recent self-initiated contact” (ACPR, 2004, p.5).

The Macquarie Fields community and police relationship, therefore, appears to lie outside the norm, and offers a key opportunity to closely examine the relationship between social disorganisation and police perceptions of accountability.

**Summary**

This chapter has discussed the importance of accountability in policing. Although successive governments in Australia have throughout the years introduced a number of
accountability mechanisms, police accountability to some degree remains problematic. For instance, NSWP following the Wood Royal Commission implemented wide-ranging accountability reform. However, various academics and an independent review conducted by the Hay Group identified deficiencies in the reform process. Notwithstanding this concern, in recent times Australian police organisations through their published annual reports have indicated a commitment to reform regarding accountability. This reform includes community policing initiatives to facilitate accountability towards local communities. Although it is noted that concern exists amongst some academics concerning the effectiveness and practicality of community policing. In order for community policing initiatives to be successful, public support is essential. This can be eroded by factors such as police misconduct and social disorganisation. Police are also not immune to factors associated with the policing role which can adversely impact upon perceptions and attitudes towards community members. Negative aspects of the police culture and unconstructive experiences associated with operational policing can adversely impact upon police attitudes. In addition, the performance of duties within a socially disorganised community can negatively affect attitudes, behaviour and the professional conduct of police.

It is noted however that much of the literature canvassed within this chapter is drawn from the United States of America. Consequently, difficulties do arise in attempting to apply their findings to the Australian context in an uncritical manner. Notwithstanding this concern, it is contended that a gap in literature exists in terms of police perceptions of the levels of their accountability being influenced by the ‘type’ of community they work in. It is suggested that evidence exists through the dissatisfaction expressed by residents from Macquarie Fields, a socially disorganised community, concerning the
attitudes and behaviour of local police. The following chapter, Chapter Three, presents an outline of the methodology and research design used to study the relationship between Macquarie Fields police and the local community members with whom they come in contact.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter, Chapter Three, describes the qualitative research design used to study whether community policing initiatives implemented by Macquarie Fields police management since 2005 have impacted upon local police perceptions of accountability to the community and led to improved police-community relations. This chapter will also present the processes undertaken in gaining ethics approval from Griffith University and approval from NSWP to undertake research at the Macquarie Fields Patrol. Also discussed, is the selection of participants from government and non-government agencies servicing the Macquarie Fields community, as well as local police; their role in the data collection process; triangulation and analysis of data and identification of themes. In addition, the potential limitations of this study will be examined along with ethical considerations. Finally, this chapter will describe my previous employment as a police officer and procedures imbedded in the research design such as bracketing and independent review to overcome any bias within the data gathering process which could have arisen from my prior knowledge and assumptions.

The interest in this particular case stems from accounts given by local residents after the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots, regarding a history of poor police conduct and behaviour leading up to the riots. The aim of this study is to capture police and community members’ views as to whether community policing initiatives introduced at
Macquarie Fields, since the riots of 2005, have changed local police perceptions of accountability to the community. It uses interviews and observations to examine the interactions of local police with their community members. Given that this research is about perceptions held by participants, a qualitative methodological approach is appropriate.

Qualitative approaches are characterised by the use of words to discover the subject’s world, which includes their understanding and views on certain issues and their reasons for certain actions (Bachman & Schutt, 2001; Bouma, 1993; Creswell, 1998; Hakim, 1987; Jupp, 1989; Punch, 1998). A strength of qualitative methodology is its allowance for researchers to gain a richer insight into the understanding and reasoning of the participants (Bachman & Schutt, 2001; Hakim, 1987; Jupp, 1989; Punch, 1998). In regards to what this study was attempting to achieve and the appropriateness of qualitative research in this situation, I am mindful of the comments of Bouma (1993) who states, “In addition to providing impressions and feelings about a particular situation, qualitative research often seeks to answer the question, ‘What is going on here?’” (Bouma, 1993, p.171).

As indicated in Chapter 1, the research questions posed in this research project include

- **To what extent do police and community service representatives think that adverse police community relations contributed to the Macquarie Fields conflict of 2005?**
- **What was the nature of police-community relations prior to the riot?**
- **How did police attitudes and behaviours influence community attitudes and behaviour?**
- What were police perceptions of their accountability to the community at the time of the conflict?
- What community policing initiatives have been introduced in Macquarie Fields since the riots?
- Have community policing initiatives changed police perceptions of accountability to the Macquarie Fields community and have they led to better police-community relations?
- What was their intended impact on local police perceptions of their membership to the local community?
- How have these changed police-community relations since the riots?
- To what extent do people attribute any changes to community policing initiatives?
- Have police perceptions of accountability to the Macquarie Fields community changed?

This qualitative study has used an ethnographic approach. This type of approach has been described by Tedlock (2003, p.165) as, “an ongoing attempt to place specific encounters, events, and understandings into a fuller, more meaningful context” (p.165). Other features of ethnographic design include its main focus, which is to obtain a better understanding of specific behaviour as it occurs within a cultural or social context (Punch, 2005; Tedlock, 2003). Ethnography is also seen as useful in gathering a better understanding of groups such as organisations and institutions (Flick, 2006; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Patton, 2002; Punch, 2005).
In this case, the focus was upon the cultural group of general duties police (street police) attached to Macquarie Fields, a socially disadvantaged community in western Sydney. This approach also focuses on examining whether community policing initiatives implemented by senior police management at Macquarie Fields have impacted upon the perceptions of those police concerning accountability to the local community, and have led to improved police-community relations.

In terms of ethnographic case study design and the processes undertaken to capture data, Creswell (2009) described the process as “…a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher studies an intact cultural group in a natural setting over a prolonged period of time by collecting, primarily, observational and interview data” (Creswell, 2009, p.13).

In this study, data was collected through interviews conducted with Macquarie Fields police and community provider participants from government and non-government agencies servicing the Macquarie Fields community. In addition, unobtrusive observations were conducted upon police participants performing their duties and interacting with community members.

Besides the ethnographic methods and purpose, this is a case study (Creswell, 2009; O’Leary, 2005; Patton, 2002; Stake, 1995; Yin 2009). I am mindful that Yin’s (2009) definition of the case study approach extends the boundaries of what must be regarded by an ethnographer as it considers the context in which the case study is situated and advocates for strategies to be employed to distinguish the case from its context. Yin (2009) advocates that the case study approach is an “all-encompassing method” (p.18)
consisting of a two part process. Firstly, the researcher, in determining whether the case study method is appropriate for use in their study, needs to consider the contextual framework in which their study’s case exists. He states, “…you would use the case study method because you wanted to understand a real life phenomenon in depth, but such understanding encompassed important contextual conditions – because they were highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study” (Yin, 2009, p.18).

It was the intention of this present study, not just to examine the phenomenon of perceptions of accountability to the local community held by street police at Macquarie Fields but, to examine possible contextual factors such as, the level of respect afforded to police by residents which may impact upon their perceptions of accountability and relationship with the community.

The second component of the case study approach, as advocated by Yin (2009), consists of the construction of data collection and analysis strategies that assist in distinguishing the subject of the study from the context in which it is situated. These strategies involve developing propositions derived from theoretical literature which then guide the data collection, its triangulation and analysis. Yin (2009) stated that this approach to case study research:

…copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis (Yin, 2009, p.18).
Guided by Yin’s (2009) definition, this study aimed to use theoretical propositions gleaned from the literature to develop interview questions and guide data analysis. In addition, triangulation methods were used to collect data from a number of sources. These consisted of interviews conducted with; street police, police managers, government and non-government service providers and observations of police performing duties which will be elaborated further upon in this chapter.

In this instance, there was another factor to take into account. Stake (1995, p.39) argues that, in seeking to grasp an understanding of the complexities of a case study, the researcher must take into account all contexts of the case that include the “political, social, historical and especially personal contexts” (Stake, 1995, p.17). Similarly, Patton (2002) argues that the purpose of a case study “is to gather comprehensive systematic, and in depth information about each case of interest” (Patton, 2002, p.447). Therefore, beside police perceptions of accountability to the community at Macquarie Fields and their relationship with the local community, media reports at the time of the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots, which suggested their causation arose from community discontent with the behaviour and conduct of local police, will also be considered, as will the wider political and social context.

The political context includes the assertions, made by the serving government at the time and members of the police hierarchy, that community discontent was not the source of the riots, but, rather, the actions of a handful of criminal thugs. Information concerning the political context was sourced through the ‘Factiva’ data base which identified media reports concerning the Macquarie Fields riots published from 25 February 2005 to present day. In addition, Hansard was accessed to identify New South
Wales parliamentary debate, which occurred during 2005, concerning the Macquarie Fields riots. The social context includes attempts by government and senior police management to improve police-community relations at Macquarie Fields through community policing initiatives and greater accountability to the community. This information was obtained through evidence deposed by NSWP and government officials before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Social Issues into the Macquarie Fields riots, which was conducted during 2005.

In addition, information was also obtained through the final report of the Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006). Further social context information was sought which suggested that, despite efforts of NSWP management to improve police-community relations poor relations still existed between police and the local community. This was sourced using the ‘Factiva’ data base which was searched for any media reports concerning the subject of ‘Macquarie Fields’ and ‘police’ for the period 25 February 2005 to present day. Also sourced were submissions and evidence deposed to the Standing Committee on Social Issues into the Macquarie Fields riots by government/non-government service providers and community members, as well, as the final report of the Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006). Finally, the personal context consists of the views and attitudes held by Macquarie Fields police towards their local community members, which was obtained through semi-structured interviews.

In terms of the use of the case study approach and its suitability for this study, Stake (1995), identified three types of case study, that is, ‘instrumental, collective and intrinsic’. The instrumental case study is undertaken when, by examining a particular
case, the researcher is assisted in gaining an insight into the research question.

Collective case studies consist of the study of a number of cases in order to answer a research question. The intrinsic case study is undertaken when the interest of the researcher is concerned with the particularity of the specific case. The intrinsic case study approach was chosen for this study to understand the complexities of this specific case, the Macquarie fields patrol (O’Leary, 2005; Stake, 1995). In addition, as highlighted by Marshall and Rossman, (2006) findings from qualitative studies may be transferable to similar situations. In terms of this present study, it is contended that findings regarding current perceptions of accountability held by police at Macquarie Fields, their relationship with the local community and associated political, social and personal contexts, as well as, recommendations arising from this study in terms of implications for policy, practice and procedure, may be transferable to the policing of other disadvantaged communities where there is tension between community members and local police.

Thus, this study has endeavoured to provide an in-depth analysis of policing at Macquarie Fields with a view to stimulate discussion concerning the complexities of policing this, and other similar communities, where police/community tension exists. In terms of these objectives Hakim (2000) recognises that, “Case studies are a useful design for research on organizations and institutions in both private and public sectors” (p.69).
**Research design**

This section provides an outline of the qualitative research design processes that were followed to identify appropriate sources of data and suitable participants, gain entry into the field, and collect and triangulate data.

**Sources of data**

This research needed to consider the perceptions and actions of a range of players in the Macquarie Fields context in order to examine the accountability of street police and their relationships with the local community. Consequently, in selecting sources of data for this study, I was mindful of the comments of Rubin and Rubin (2005) that, “You need to select interviewees who collectively present an overall view of your topic” (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 70). Therefore, in terms of the selection of participants, they were chosen initially through purposive sampling (Patton, 2002; Walter 2006).

In regards to the use of purposive sampling, Walter (2006), observed, “In purposive sampling, the sample is selected in a systematic way based on what we know about the target population and the purpose of the study” (Walter, 2006, p.199). This type of sampling is supported by Denzin and Lincoln (2000) who observe that purposive sampling is used by many qualitative researchers, “as they seek out groups, settings and individuals where and for whom the process being studied are most likely to occur” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.370). In addition, subsequent participants were selected through snowball sampling methods. In regards to this strategy, Patton (2002) observed, “this is an approach for locating information – rich key informants or critical cases” (p.237).
Purposive sampling was utilised to recruit executive members of those government and non-government agencies servicing the Macquarie Fields community, who provided written submissions and/or deposed evidence before the New South Wales Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues following the 2005 riots. On the 17 March 2005, the then Minister for Police, the Hon Carl Scully referred an inquiry into the public disturbances at Macquarie Fields to the New South Wales Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues. One of the terms of reference of this inquiry was to report on “The underlying causes and problems which may have contributed to individual and collective acts of violence and social disorder.” (2006, p.iv). A list of government and non-government agencies that provided evidence to the Standing Committee is appended (Appendix 1). These agencies have been recognised by the Standing Committee as servicing the social needs of Macquarie Fields residents.

In addition, four participants from government/non-government agencies were recruited through snowball sampling. This was achieved by asking participants from government and non-government agencies to refer to the researcher names of potential participants from other agencies.

To examine Macquarie Fields police officers’ perceptions of accountability and views of the local community, it was considered that purposive sampling was again the most appropriate type of sampling method. Patton (2002) supports the use of purposive sampling when a researcher wants to learn, “a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research” (Patton, 2002, p.46) in this case, police officers undertaking policing duties at Macquarie Fields. Subsequently, interviews with police managers attached to Macquarie Fields Patrol were conducted, as were
interviews and ride-along observations with police performing general duties at Macquarie Fields.

In addition, as previously mentioned, the following sources of data were also used: accounts provided by local residents through media reports following the 2005 riots concerning the conduct and behaviour of police at Macquarie Fields; evidence deposed by NSWP and government officials before the New South Wales Parliament Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006) concerning community policing initiatives; evidence deposed by local residents and various government and non-government service providers to the New South Wales Parliament Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006) regarding police behaviour and conduct at Macquarie Fields and findings and recommendations of the New South Wales Parliament Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006).

**Interview data collection design**

Data was collected from government/non-government service providers and police participants through face to face interviews. The interviews used a semi-structured format, scaffolded upon theoretical, “conceptions of the research topic” (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p.131) with open-ended questions. The use of semi-structured questions has been supported by theorists such as Rubin and Rubin (2005) who comment, “Main questions ensure that the research problem will be thoroughly examined and that each part of a broad topic will be explored” (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p.135).
Information sought from government/non-government respondents included their views concerning: the behaviour and conduct of local police; the level of accountability demonstrated by police towards the local community; the relationship between local police and community members and respondents’ awareness of community policing initiatives being implemented by the local police. Data was also sought from government/non-government service providers regarding the views and experiences articulated by local community member clients concerning their interactions with Macquarie Fields police. This encapsulated the views expressed by respondents’ clients concerning policing at Macquarie Fields and included: the community member’s opinions about police presence in their neighbourhood; whether their views are ever sought by police; whether they feel respected by police; the behaviour of local police and level of assistance police provide to victims of crime.

It is contended that this interview design also enhanced the quality of data from police respondents. For instance, as I wished to gather information regarding police understanding of accountability, opinions of the types of people whom they serve and their perceptions of the level of their accountability, I considered that open-ended questions served as the most useful data collection method (Khan & Connell, 1957; Neuman, 1997). The primary advantage of using open-ended questions is that they allow the researcher to use a certain degree of flexibility in asking participants further questions when issues of interest arise during interviews (Sudman & Bradburn, 1974; Williamson, 2002). In addition, open-ended questions “allow the respondent to use his or her own words, thus maximizing the spontaneity and perhaps validity of the response” (Dijkstra & Van der Zouwen, 1982, p.42).
Closed questions were also considered as a method of data collection, as I was aware of the possible advantages of this type of question, which includes its assistance in helping a respondent search for an answer (Dijkstra & Van der Zouwen, 1982) and the allowance closed questions make for the participant who has less motivation to communicate (Kahn & Connell, 1957). However, I was also mindful that in using closed questions there was the risk of a possible loss of information (Neuman, 1997).

**Observation data collection design**

In addition to interviews, unobtrusive observations were also utilised to gather data pertaining to the interactions of local street police with the Macquarie Fields community. Observation has been described by Marshall and Rossman (2006) as, “…the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviours, and artefacts (objects) in the social setting chosen for study. The observational record is frequently referred to as field notes – detailed, non judgemental, concrete descriptions of what has been observed” (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p.98).

In terms of the case study approach and the use of observational strategies, Yin (2009) commented that, “observations serve as yet another source of evidence in a case study” (p.109). In developing appropriate strategies to conduct observations of police respondents, I adopted strategies touched upon by Flick (2006) & Marshall and Rossman (2006, p.99). They contend that participant observation consists of a two fold process, involving, firstly, the initial entry into the field in order “to discover the recurring patterns of behaviour and relationships.” The second part of the participant observation process involves focusing upon observing what the research question is asking. Flick (2006, p.213) suggests that, “…the observation should also move through
a process of becoming increasingly concrete and concentrated on the aspects that are essential for the research questions.”

In terms of the first part of this process, during my initial observations of police performing their duties, I merely watched and listened to them interacting with the local community members. I concentrated on their interpersonal communication, such as body language and their tone of conversation towards local community members. Particular notice was taken of the behaviour which reoccurred amongst police participants; and the attitudes expressed by police participants following their interactions with the local residents.

During the second part of this observation process, observational data pertaining to this study’s research questions were collected. This involved observing the interactions of police and community members and paying particular attention to the behaviour and conducts of police in relation to the theoretically defined core components of successful community policing and associated police-community accountability issues. These included: police treating community members as partners in fighting crime; police solving crime problems with the assistance of community members; police showing respect towards community members; police seeking the views of community members concerning crime problems and police treating residents as equals.

As this study wished to observe the interactions of Macquarie Fields police with local community members, I was also aware of the comments of Stake (1995) requiring the observer to be ‘noninterventionalist’. Therefore I ensured that a strict protocol was followed during my observations of police performing their duties. This entailed,
during the police-community member interaction, maintaining a distance and refraining from communicating with either party.

**Triangulation of data**

The multiple sources of data used during this study increased the trustworthiness of my findings through triangulation (Flick, 2006; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; O’Leary, 2005; Stake, 1995). Theorists such as Stake (1995) and Silverman (2005) highlight the need for research to be accurate in its conclusions. In using triangulation protocols, which rely upon gathering perceptions from various sources, misperceptions are minimised and the truthfulness of the findings enhanced (Creswell, 2009).

Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p.391) identified four types of triangulation: data triangulation, the use of a variety of data sources in a study; investigator triangulation, the use of several different researchers; theory triangulation, using multiple perspectives to interpret a data set; and, finally, methodological triangulation, the use of multiple methods to study a single problem. This study used data triangulation to enhance validity (Patton, 2002). Interviews with police stationed at Macquarie Fields, which sought their perceptions pertaining to accountability, community policing and the community members they serve, was triangulated against observations of those officers interacting with local community members whilst performing their duties. In turn, this was triangulated against interviews conducted with staff from government and non-government community service providers servicing the Macquarie Fields area. These interviews captured the views of the respondents and the accounts provided to them by clients concerning policing at Macquarie Fields. The benefit of such a process was that it allowed me to discover if the same meaning was carried by what was being
observed and reported in different circumstances (Stake, 1995, p.113). In terms of the case study approach to this study and the appropriateness of triangulating data from a number of different sources, Yin (2009) observed, “Thus any case study finding or conclusion is likely to be more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information, following a corroborating mode” (Yin, 2009, p.115).

Interviews conducted with government/non-government service providers and police participants, as well as, observations of police participants continued until I considered that saturation of information had been reached. Flick (2006) describes the saturation process as occurring when, “Sampling and integrating further material is finished when the “theoretical saturation” of a category or group of cases has been reached (ie nothing new emerges any more)” (Flick, 2006, p.127).

**Research process**

The following section discusses the research process undertaken in accordance with the aforementioned research design. Also discussed are the limitations of this research and ethical considerations.

**Ethics approval**

During 2007 approval was granted by the Griffith University Ethics Committee for this research project to be conducted during the period 1 September, 2007 to 31 December, 2008 (Appendix 2). Application was also made around this time to the New South Wales Police Force for permission to interview and observe police officers attached to the Macquarie Fields patrol performing duties. This approval was subsequently granted in June 2008 (Appendix 3).
Making contact with the field

During August 2007, I contacted via telephone and email those members of the government and non-government agencies who provided evidence before the Standing Committee on Social Issues. A number of participants from these organisations expressed interest immediately, whilst six participants deferred making a decision pending approval from their supervisors. The participants nominated the time and place for their interviews. In regards to the initial contact made with police respondents, during May, 2008, I, accompanied by the Principal Research Officer, New South Wales Police Force, met with the Macquarie Fields Police Local Area Commander. During the course of this meeting I was introduced to a senior police manager attached to Macquarie Fields patrol, who was appointed as a police liaison officer for the research project.

Police participants were recruited for this research project during the period June to November, 2008. During this time, at the commencement of most working weeks, I would contact the police liaison officer at Macquarie Fields and inform him of the proposed dates and times I intended to undertake research at the station. Upon my attendance at the police station, I was introduced to police rostered to perform general duties for that particular shift. I would speak to those potential respondents, inviting them to participate.

At the beginning of each interview, participants were provided with an information sheet (Appendices 4 & 5) which explained the purpose of the study and included the approval of the Griffith University Ethics Committee. All participants completed two ‘Informed Consent Statements’ (Appendix 6) to participate in the research, one of which was retained by the participant, the other by the researcher. I obtained
permission from each participant to audio-tape record their interview. Participants were informed that, if they wished, the audio-tape recorder could be turned off at any time during the interview. In regards to observations conducted of police respondents interacting with community members whilst performing their duties, notes were either unobtrusively made by the researcher whilst the interaction was occurring or shortly following the observed interaction. At all times, at the commencement of observations, police respondents were fully informed that they could withdraw their permission to be observed at any time during field observations. At all times all participants were fully informed that they could withdraw from the study at any stage of the research project.

Almost all interviews with government/non-government participants were conducted within working hours at their place of employment. However, one interview was conducted in the food court of a local shopping centre at Macquarie Fields. Although this was a different type of interview setting from the others conducted with community service provider participants, I considered the location to be rather relaxing and somewhat free of the work related interruptions encountered during the course of interviews with some of the other community service participants.

I was aware of the time these participants were giving out of their busy work schedules, and was subsequently flexible, to fit in with the participants’ availability. On a number of occasions during an interview, I was requested by participants to suspend the interview for a short period of time whilst they attended to a pressing work related matter. Although this would initially disrupt the flow of the participant’s conversation during the interview, I considered that these short disruptions demonstrated to participants my relaxed and flexible approach to the interviews. This in turn,
contributed to the development of rapport between the participant and me, which assisted the flow of conversation.

Almost all police approached by myself at Macquarie Fields agreed to be interviewed and observed whilst undertaking their duties and interacting with members of the Macquarie Fields community. However, two police respondents initially agreed to participate in the research project, but, due to heavy workloads encountered during their shifts, were not available to be interviewed. Subsequent arrangements were made via email for them to be interviewed at a later date, but the respondents informed me they were not available.

As a former police officer, I was aware of the heavy workload of police participants and associated time constraints. Consequently, I made every effort to minimise the disruption of the research project upon police participants’ work routine. Most interviews with police participants were conducted in a quiet room of the station, in between them attending call outs and performing routine patrols. Some participants were interviewed during their meal breaks, whilst a couple of participants, due to the busy workload encountered during their shifts, were interviewed at another time nominated by them.

All police respondents who consented to be interviewed for this research project also agreed to be observed performing their policing duties and interacting with members of the Macquarie Fields community. During June to November 2008, I accompanied police performing general duties on sixteen occasions and conducted ninety eight hours of observations.
Participants

All individuals who participated in this study met the pre-determined criteria required for them to be able to take part. In regards to the government/non-government service provider participants, all respondents were involved with service agencies providing assistance to the residents of Macquarie Fields. Police participants consisted of police managers attached to the Macquarie Fields patrol and street police performing duties at Macquarie Fields. In total eighteen community workers employed by government/non-government agencies servicing the Macquarie Fields community participated in the research project, as did twenty seven street police and three police managers, as displayed in table 3.

Table 3: Profile of respondents’ employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non Government Service Provider</th>
<th>Government Service Provider</th>
<th>New South Wales Police Manager</th>
<th>New South Wales Street Police</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants’ stories

Interviews conducted with all participants consisted of semi-structured face to face in-depth interviews with open ended questions. At the commencement of interviews, all participants were informed verbally and in writing about the project, the method of data collection and storage, the usage of the data, publishing of research findings and confidentiality procedures. Prior to the commencement of the interviews, participants were asked some background demographic questions (Appendices 7 & 8). As previously mentioned, interviews were conducted with government/non-government
community service providers during September to November, 2007. I initially commenced interviewing these participants using an interview schedule as suggested by Yin (2009) in conjunction with the aforementioned interview questions (Appendix 9). As more interviews were conducted with community service providers, I became more relaxed and felt less of a need to refer to the interview schedule and questions. Instead, I came to memorise the main topic areas of the interview questions and adopted the practice described by Rubin and Rubin (2005) who suggested, “To provide overall organization yet allow for spontaneous conversation, some researchers just make themselves a list of issues that they want to discuss” (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p.148). I found this practice minimized the need to concentrate on the next listed interview question which in turn, reduced the distraction of having to concentrate on the following question (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

During the course of interviews with community service participants, I found that whilst respondents would initially address the interview question, their topic of conversation would drift away somewhat from policing and the Macquarie Fields community to other areas of social justice. Aware of this occurrence, I would be respectful of their views and not interrupt those participants, but, rather, make a note to remind myself of the need to return to the interview topic. This practice has been touched upon by Rubin and Rubin (2005), who state, “Qualitative interviews are conversations in which a researcher gently guides a conversational partner in an extended discussion” (p.4).

Similar to interviews conducted with government/non-government service providers, I initially conducted interviews with police participants using a structured set of
questions (Appendix 10). As more interviews were conducted, they became less structured and the questions acted more as triggers for the respondents to freely speak about their lived experience. During the data collection process with police participants, I discovered that a significant degree of rapport was required to be established in order to have the respondents fully engage in the interview process. Initially, I adopted the practice of commencing interview questions with police participants immediately following the articulation of their consent. However, after conducting two interviews in this manner, I came to realise that rapport with the participants had not been adequately established and this was impacting adversely upon those respondents’ flow of information.

It appeared to me that the responses from these initial participants were not relaxed or spontaneous. Although polite, these respondents appeared to maintain their distance and gave the impression they were taking care to ensure their responses accorded with police organisational policy. Prior to the third interview with a police participant, I reflected upon this situation and became aware of Stake’s (1995) advice that, “Opportunity should be taken early to get acquainted with the people, the spaces, the schedules and the problems of the case. With most studies, there is a hurry to get started, yet a quiet entry is highly desirable” (Stake, 1995, p.59).

I subsequently decided to alter the interview schedule plan and adopt the practice of delaying interviews with police participants until time had been spent accompanying respondents on patrol performing their duties. I found that this approach of conducting interviews allowed for time to be spent conversing with participants whilst out on patrol and allowed for the necessary rapport to be established between myself and
participants. Ensuing interviews using this approach were found to be more relaxed and spontaneous, with richer information forthcoming. During the course of interviews conducted with police participants, many expressed their frustrations as they reflected upon incidents with Macquarie Fields residents, which they considered demonstrated a lack of appreciation and respect for police and authority. Many participants also expressed their frustrations at policing a community whose members they perceived predominantly did not assist themselves. I was respectful of these police participants and respected their feelings.

In addition, interviews were conducted with government/non-government service provider participants and police respondents until I considered that nothing new from the data was emerging (Flick, 2006).

During the course of this study, observations were conducted of twenty seven general duties police attached to the Macquarie Fields patrol performing their duties and interacting with the community. As previously mentioned, I accompanied police performing general duties on sixteen occasions and conducted ninety eight hours of observations. During the observations of police participants, I ensured that the conditions of approval for the research project, as stipulated by NSWP (Appendix 3), were adhered to at all times. These conditions included not speaking to and interacting with members of the public whilst observing police on patrol. In addition, other research conditions I complied with included strictly following instructions given by Macquarie Fields Police, not being conveyed in a police vehicle whilst it was engaged in a pursuit or responding to an urgent call out, and maintaining strict confidentiality of police information which fell outside of theambits of this research project.
I consider that my previous employment as a police officer of twenty years assisted in the observation and interview process with police participants. I was aware of the nuances of policing, such as officer safety requirements on patrol, and would ensure that a distance would always be maintained from police and the member of the public with whom they were interacting. I also ensured that I would always walk behind police when entering a residence or approaching a group of people. In addition, I did not interfere or interrupt police during their interactions with members of the public. On many occasions, members of the Macquarie Fields community assumed that I was a police officer. I would immediately inform the individual this was not the case and produce an information sheet (Appendix 11) which provided information concerning the research project, a copy of which was handed to the member of the public.

Through strictly maintaining the aforementioned research protocols and officer safety requirements, I reduced the necessity for police participants to be concerned and pre-occupied with my safety on patrol. This assisted me in being accepted by the participants and helped establish my credibility, which in turn, assisted in the facilitation of rapport and richness of information gathered.

It was also planned that I would observe Macquarie Fields Police Accountability Community Team and Community Safety Precinct Committee meetings. Unfortunately, during the period of June to November, 2008 when data was being collected from police participants at the Macquarie Fields patrol, no such meetings were held.
Bias and bracketing

As previously mentioned, I was employed as a police officer for twenty years and my interest in policing socially disadvantaged communities such as Macquarie Fields was the primary motivator for this research. Having performed policing duties within areas containing pockets of Department of Housing communities, I was aware of the need to identify any prejudices or biases which may have arisen from my previous experiences and knowledge. I was mindful of the comments of Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) who stated, “Unacknowledged bias may entirely invalidate the results of an interview inquiry” (p.170) and went about taking steps to reduce any bias within the research project (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

Firstly, guided by the comments of Patton (2002), I “adopted a stance of neutrality” (p.51). This was achieved through the process of ‘bracketing’ in which my knowledge and assumptions pertaining to the policing of disadvantaged communities were identified and put aside, “so as not to taint the data” (Crotty, 1998, p.83). I remained objective throughout the interview process and took care not to influence the participants. This allowed participants to provide accounts of their own experiences, free of any contributions. I also paid special attention to understanding the participants’ perspective and took care not to influence them (Patton, 2002). In addition, I sought the services of an independent researcher who critically reviewed the data and its interpretation (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

Transcription of interviews

I transcribed all eighteen interviews conducted with community service respondents and the thirty interviews undertaken with police participants. Although time
consuming, I considered that a number of benefits relating to the research process occurred from so doing. Firstly, I discovered that, through re-listening to the interviews, I was reminded of the participant’s tone and emphasis on certain words which assisted in the emotional aspect of the interview being re-lived. This has been supported by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) who stated:

Researchers who transcribe their own interviews will learn much about their own interviewing style; to some extent they will have the social and emotional aspects of the interview situation present or reawakened during transcription, and will already have started the analysis of the meaning of what was said (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p.180).

Secondly, I discovered that by undertaking the transcription of participants’ interviews, data began to be reflected upon and analysed, which assisted the commencement of the research process. This process has been discussed by Marshall and Rossman (2006) who mention, “The researcher’s transcription, done with the literature review, previous data and earlier analytic memos in mind became a useful part of data analysis and not mere clerical duty” (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p.153).

**Data analysis and coding**

My analysis of the data consisted of an inductive and deductive approach (Patton, 2002). In terms of the deductive analysis, data was analysed through an existing framework based upon the formulation of the research project’s interview questions. This consisted of the creation of codes from the theoretical framework (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994) prior to interviews and observations being conducted. Inductive analysis, the discovery of “patterns, themes and categories
in one’s data” (Patton 2002, p.453) occurred through careful reading of the interviews, observation notes and the allocation of codes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Patton, 2002) shortly after they were constructed, as suggested by Richards (2005) & Rubin and Rubin (2005). I also utilised the Nvivo (2008) data analysis package to assist in the analysis of a large amount of data. However, I was mindful of the comments of Bazeley (2007) that, “The use of a computer is not intended to supplant time-honoured ways of learning from data but to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of such learning” (Bazeley, 2007, p.2).

All transcriptions, observation notes, memos and annotations were entered into the NVivo (2008) software computer program. These sources of data were then subjected to the coding process. The transcripts were read, re-read, reflected upon and subsequently coded for preliminary emerging descriptions and concepts in the data. These concepts were stored in nodes (Appendix 12) and later clustered together into themes. I reflected upon the nodes through the use of annotations and memos throughout the process.

Following analysis of the data the following eight themes emerged:

- police management initiatives
- police-community relationship
- police perceptions of accountability
- police notions of community partnership
- tactics employed by police to drive down crime rate
- police attitudes towards the Macquarie Fields community
- police perceptions of difference between themselves and local residents
- police education.

Following further analysis and reflection, the theme of ‘police management initiatives’ was divided into:

- good intentions of police hierarchy
- community meetings
- customer service model
- police initiatives involving local youth.

The theme ‘police-community relationship’ was further divided into:

- young police
- police-community relations since 2005.

The theme ‘police attitudes concerning the Macquarie Fields Community’ was separated into the themes of:

- appreciation
- being used
- frustration
- respect
- belonging to the community
- opinions of victims
- views of suspects
- stereotyping
- observations of professional conduct
- motivations for professional conduct.
The theme ‘factors impacting upon police attitudes towards the Macquarie Fields community’ was divided into the themes of:

- police contact with the Macquarie Fields community
- police-local youth interactions
- observations of police-youth interactions
- police youth liaison officer
- stereotyping of community members by police.

The theme of ‘police perceptions of difference between themselves and the Macquarie Fields residents’ was divided into:

- ambition
- care of children
- morals and values
- drug usage
- education
- employment
- hygiene
- motivation
- respect for authority and family.

In addition, the theme of ‘police education’ was separated into the themes of:

- initial shock experienced by police commencing duties at Macquarie Fields
- inadequacies of police training to assist police interact effectively with youth.
Finally, the themes were divided into two categories, firstly, to provide a descriptive representation of the police-community relationship at Macquarie Fields and, secondly, to identify and explain the underlying factors of this particular police-community relationship.

Firstly, in terms of the police community relationship, the themes of Macquarie Fields police managers’ approach to community policing, police-community relationship, police perceptions of accountability, police perceptions of community partnerships and police crime control measures were clustered to provide a description of the police-community relationship. Secondly, the themes of police attitudes towards the Macquarie Fields community, young police, perceptions of difference to the Macquarie Fields community and police training were identified as underlying factors which provide an explanation to the police-community relationship at Macquarie Fields.

**Limitations of the research**

As previously mentioned, there are distinct advantages in using qualitative research methods for this study. However, I also recognise the limitations of qualitative research methods. The first possible limitation is that results cannot be generalised to other situations (Hakim, 1987). In this present case, police respondents performing duties at Macquarie Fields, was not representative of the NSWP population and therefore subsequent results do not allow for generalisations to be drawn concerning other police patrols and disadvantaged communities. However, as observed by Marshall and Rossman (2006) “Although no qualitative studies are generalizable in the probabilistic sense, their findings may be transferable” (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p.42). It is therefore contended that the findings of this study may be transferable regarding other
disadvantaged communities where tensions exist between police and community members.

A second possible limitation of this study is the sample size. During the course of this study I conducted interviews with 14 government/non-government service providers from a potential pool size of 41 individuals who provided written submissions and/or deposed evidence before the New South Wales Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues following the 2005 riots. An additional 4 government/non-government service providers were also interviewed after participants from government and non-government agencies were asked to refer to the researcher names of potential participants from other agencies. Thirty police were interviewed, of which 27 were also observed performing duties and interacting with local residents, from a potential pool size of approximately 100 General Duty (street) police. I addressed this potential limitation in two ways. Firstly, the data which I collected was rich in information. This strategy of collecting rich information from a small sample size has been supported by Patton (2002) who observed, “In-depth information from a small number of people can be very valuable, especially if the cases are information rich” (Patton, 2002, p.244).

Secondly, interviews and observations were conducted with participants until saturation of information had been reached (Flick, 2006). Consequently, data collection ceased only when no new information was seen to emerge. In terms of these aforementioned strategies I consider that the sample accessed provided in-depth information which allowed for a comprehensive understanding of participants’ experiences.
A third potential limitation was that a number of police participants interviewed and observed for this study were not performing duties at Macquarie Fields at the time of the 2005 riots. Therefore, data captured from these participants was limited to their recent experiences and current perceptions concerning policing at Macquarie Fields and the Macquarie Fields community. However, as a significant focus of this study was upon recent community policing initiatives, current police community relations and police perceptions of accountability, the data obtained from these participants is highly relevant to this study.

A fourth possible limitation of this study is the quality of data obtained from observations conducted upon police participants. These consisted of the challenges associated in having participants act naturally whilst collecting such data (O’Leary, 2005; Patton, 2002). During my observations of police performing duties and interacting with community members I felt that my presence may have influenced the manner in which participants conducted themselves. As previously mentioned, observations of police behaviour during their interactions with community members, discovered professional and proper conduct during all interactions. It could have been the case that my presence influenced police participants’ behavior, as this appeared to be especially so when officers were faced with ethical dilemmas. Although I recognise this as a potential shortcoming to the quality of this data, the observation process allowed me to develop rapport with police participants which facilitated in-depth information being provided during interviews. Alternatively though, it may be the case that my presence did not influence participants’ behavior, as they did articulate that the motivation for their professional conduct was borne out of a desire to avoid being subject to complaint and facing disciplinary action.
Another possible limiting factor to the quality of the observational data is that my previous background as a police officer may have biased the information I selected to record during the observations of police participants. This issue has been touched upon by Patton (2002) who observed, “…the selective perception of the observer may distort the data” (p.306). However, I overcame this impediment and increased the trustworthiness of my interpretations through identifying any biases I may have possessed in terms of policing disadvantaged communities and putting these aside through bracketing (Crotty, 1998). A fifth potential limitation of this qualitative research is that the position of an interviewer may adversely influence participants to answer questions in a way they consider will please the interviewer. This is also been referred to as ‘social desirability’ (Sudman & Bradburn, 1974). However, as previously mentioned, steps were taken to minimise the possibility of this occurring.

A sixth limitation of the qualitative research undertaken is that, answers provided by the participants during the interview process could be influenced by the way in which the question has been structured or the interviewers expectations (Dijkstra & Van der Zouwen, 1982, p.3). This may have been the case with some respondents, but there were a sufficient number of surprises in the data to indicate that any influence, if it was present, was sporadic and/or specific to only a few interviews. Although it is acknowledged that qualitative approaches to research have their limitations, I consider that the benefits gained in obtaining detailed information from the participants far outweighed the aforementioned limitations. As previously mentioned, the aim of this research is to study perceptions of accountability of a specific group of police at Macquarie Fields.
**Ethical considerations**

In addition to the previously discussed ethical considerations of this research, I was aware that, because the research involved obtaining data from individuals about themselves and others, it was of the utmost importance that ethical and confidentiality issues were addressed. To ensure anonymity, I assigned all research participants in this study a pseudonym prior to the commencement of interviews and observations. Information in all transcriptions that could identify participants was anonymised. In addition, I was aware of the possibility that some information collected from police participants could be viewed unfavourably by police management. I therefore took particular care in ensuring that the identities of police participants were protected. Information which could have possibly identified police participants through the identification of specific shifts when interview and observation data were collected was not disclosed, thereby maintaining the anonymity of the respondents. In addition, ranges of age were used for police participants instead of identifying their exact ages.

During the data collection phase I was mindful of the fact that I was employed as a full time lecturer coordinating the Bachelor of Policing program through the School of Policing Studies, Charles Sturt University. It was possible that some police participants may have been undertaking the Bachelor of Policing course, or at some stage may have been taught by me. This could have raised concerns that those police may have felt some pressure or obligation to participate in the research. This was addressed in two ways. Firstly, the initial invitation to the police participants informed them that if they were students of the Bachelor of Policing course, their participation or non-participation was completely voluntary and whatever they chose to do would have no influence upon their position or performance within the Bachelor of Policing course.
Secondly, during the data gathering stage with police respondents, I ensured that I was not involved in any distance subjects, which some participants could possibly be undertaking at the time. As it eventuated, none of the thirty police participants were undertaking the Bachelor of Policing course during the data collection period, although two police participants reported they had undertaken and completed the course in previous years.

I was also aware of the need to ensure that any data obtained would not negatively impact upon police-community relations at the Macquarie Fields patrol. In terms of the type of study conducted which involved the use of interviews, I was mindful of the comments of Kvale (1996) and reflected upon my responsibility regarding, “the possible consequences not only for the persons taking part in the study but for the larger group they represent as well” (p.116). Concerning participants from government/non-government agencies, at no time have neither participants nor their agencies been identified, thereby preventing the possibility of any comments being attributed to that person or agency. In addition, information obtained from these respondents was not disclosed at any time to Macquarie Fields police management or police participants.

In regards to police participants, particular care was taken that their views and perceptions concerning Macquarie Fields residents were not disclosed to the government / non-government service provider participants or members of the Macquarie Fields community. It is possible though, that if this thesis was read by a member of the Macquarie Fields community, they may take offence to some of the views expressed by various police respondents concerning the Macquarie Fields
community. This could subsequently damage that individual’s relationship with the Macquarie Fields police. I have considered this issue and decided that the location of the Macquarie Fields patrol should not be anonymised. In making this decision I am guided by the comments of Yin (2009) who stated, “…anonymity is not to be considered a desirable choice. Not only does it eliminate some important background information about the case, but it also makes the mechanics of composing the case difficult” (Yin, 2009, p.182).

In addition, it is possible, due to the case study approach and the use of quotes, that if a participant was to read this thesis they would probably recognise themselves. As this study seeks to discover perceptions and views of respondents, it is unlikely they would find anything offensive or damaging.
Finally, all data obtained through this research, such as tapes, field notes and transcripts were stored in a locked cupboard, only accessible by myself. All data material stored on the computer was protected by password, to which only I could gain access. At no time was any of this material brought into the participants’ place of employment.

**Summary**

This chapter provided an outline of the methodology and research design used to study the relationship between Macquarie Fields police and the local community members with whom they come in contact. Also presented was an overview of the steps undertaken for gaining ethics approval from Griffith University and research approval from the New South Wales Police Force. Also described was the selection of participants, their role in the data collection process, triangulation and analysis of data and identification of themes. Finally the potential limitations of this study were discussed along with ethical considerations.

The chapter also described my previous employment as a police officer and procedures imbedded in the research design such as bracketing and independent review to overcome any bias within the data gathering process which could have arisen from my prior knowledge and assumptions.

The following chapter, Chapter Four, presents a history of the Macquarie Fields riots including an analysis of the police response to the disturbance. In addition, socio-economic indicators and crime statistics are examined. Also outlined are the observations of a number of academics concerning the silencing of community discontent by the media and various politicians. Also discussed is parliamentary discussion concerning the Macquarie Fields riots via Hansard, the findings and
recommendations of the New South Wales Parliament Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues which examined the causes of the Macquarie Fields riots and a review of literature concerning the causation of riots with a particular focus on the Brixton riots of 1981 and the American race riots of 1967.
CHAPTER 4
MACQUARIE FIELDS RIOTS HISTORY

Introduction

This chapter provides a description of the Macquarie Fields riots against the backdrop of socio economic descriptors such as census data and crime statistics. It also discusses the police response to the riots through an examination of the findings and recommendations of the New South Wales Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006) Inquiry into the riots. Through a review of media reports and Parliamentary discussion via Hansard, it provides an outline of the silencing of community discontent by New South Wales politicians and sections of the media following the riots. The observations of academics regarding the political and media response are also provided.

Furthermore, the underlying causes of the 1981 Brixton riots and the 1967 American Race Riots are considered. It will be contended that the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots share important characteristics with the two aforementioned riots in terms of underlying causative features. These features consist of communities suffering from social and economic deprivation in which there is an ongoing history of poor police-community relations and the triggering of civil unrest following a police-citizen encounter.
Macquarie Fields Riots

The following discussion describes the Macquarie Fields riots, which occurred following a motor vehicle accident on the 25 February 2005 that claimed the lives of two local young men fleeing from a police pursuit. Following the accident, as specialists examined the collision site they were pelted with bricks and bottles. At 3.25 am on the 26 February “…police were pelted with bricks and rocks from Flinders’ Field and forced to take shelter to avoid being hit…Shortly before 5am police reported males collecting armloads of bricks and covering their faces and throwing bricks at police and their vehicles” (NSW Police, 2005, p. 27). There was a lull in the rioting during the day of the 26 February but in the evening the rioting erupted against police. At 9.15 pm, whilst patrolling the area a State Protection Group vehicle was pelted with rocks resulting in the windscreen being smashed. Further, during the evening, a number of local youths who were throwing rocks at police were arrested by Operations Support Group police. This subsequently dispersed the crowd. However, it is noted in its submission to the Standing Committee on Social Issues, NSWP reported that official records were unable to accurately state the exact number of people arrested as ‘some people were detained under breach of the peace provisions; these arrests were not adequately recorded’ (NSW Police, 2005, p. 37). The same report stated that:

On several occasions police experienced difficulty in arresting offenders, as those throwing rocks were often standing behind or were in close proximity to members of the public. This made it difficult to move forward and arrest offenders who shielded themselves behind others. (NSWP, 2005, p.36).

Rioting continued in the early hours of 27 February but by 2.20 am all Operations Support Group police had withdrawn from the area to the command post. The police operation ceased at 4.10 am. As was the case on the 26 February, there was a lull in the
rioting during the day of the 27 February, but at 11.20 pm that evening ‘Molotov cocktails were thrown at police’ (NSW Police, 2005, p. 42). At 11.35 pm “the crowd set a mattress on fire and placed it near the police...It appears the crowd had broken into two groups, attacking the police line from the front and from a park at the side” (NSWP, 2005, p. 43).

The NSWP report to the Standing Committee on Social Issues stated that on the afternoon of the 28 February:

A large number of Operations Support Group police were deployed during the afternoon to conduct high visibility foot patrols and make arrests where appropriate. Large teams of fully equipped Operations Support Group police made arrests throughout the evening. These arrests were met with some resistance and a large crowd of onlookers; however, they did not result in large-scale confrontation. The violence on this night was significantly less than the previous three nights and there were no major confrontations between police and the crowd. (NSWP, 2005, p. 46).

Strike Force Louden was formed on the evening of 27 February 2005 and commenced operations on the morning of 28 February to investigate those involved in the civil unrest…As a result of Strike Force Louden, which was initiated to deal with the incidents at Macquarie Fields, NSW Police laid 186 charges and arrested 59 people, of whom 27 were refused bail. Charges included assaulting police, malicious damage, malicious wounding, possession of an offensive weapon, possessing illegal drugs and rioting. (NSWP, 2005, p. 5).
Owen (2006), an academic from the University of New England stated that the riots attracted, “intense commentary and coverage by media and politicians” (p.5). For instance, Kaye and Granger (1 March, 2005) from the Australian Associated press reported the comments of the Federal opposition leader at the time, Kim Beazley, who gave the police his full support in their efforts to quell the riots. The serving Prime Minister, John Howard also threw his support behind the response of police to the riots (Australian Associated Press, 3 March, 2005). In contrast, the NSW opposition leader at the time, John Brogden, accused police of adopting a “softly, softly” response to the riots which he claimed put police lives at risk (Australian Broadcasting Corporation 1 March, 2005). Brogden increased his verbal attack on police on the 5 March, 2005 when he was reported in the Daily Telegraph as accusing the serving Police Commissioner, Ken Moroney as, “running a counselling service instead of a police force”.

The NSW premier at the time, Bob Carr and the Police Minister, Carl Scully, supported Commissioner Moroney’s handling of the riots and were reported by Kaye (13 March, 2005) from Australian Associated Press as accusing John Brogden and his NSW Opposition party as assassinating Commissioner Moroney’s character. On the 14 March, 2005 Commissioner Moroney was quoted by Lawrence from the Daily Telegraph as stating that in regards to Brogden’s attack he was, “grossly affronted about and insulted about, the reported politicisation of the office of the commissioner”.
Analysis of police response to the Macquarie Fields riots

On 17 March 2005 an Inquiry was established to both investigate the causes and the response by police to the Macquarie Fields riots. Subsequently, the New South Wales Parliament Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues conducted an Inquiry into the riots. The Inquiry was tasked with the following terms of reference:

1. Policing strategies and resources in the Macquarie Fields area, particularly in the immediate period leading up to and following the motor vehicle accident involving two fatalities on 25 February 2005;
2. Government programs and service provision in the Macquarie area, including local, State and Federal programs;
3. Non-government services and service provision in the Macquarie Fields area;
4. Whether the lessons learned from the Social Issues Committee and Coburn reports resulting from the Redfern disturbance have been utilised in this incident;
5. The underlying causes and problems which may have contributed to individual and collective acts of violence and social disorder; and
6. Any other matters arising from these terms of reference. (Standing Committee on Social Issues, 2006, p. iv).

The Standing Committee’s membership consisted of: Ms Jan Brunswoods, Australian Labor Party (Chair); The Hon Robyn Parker MLC, Liberal Party (Deputy Chair); The Hon Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC, Australian Democrats; The Hon Kayee Griffin MLC, Australian Labor Party; The Hon Charlie Lynn MLC, Liberal Party and The Hon Ian West MLC, Australian Labor Party. The Standing Committee on Social Issues in its final report stated that it had received:
…23 submissions to the Inquiry and conducted four hearings, at which it heard evidence from 45 witnesses, including government departments such as the Premier’s, Police, Housing, Education and Training and Community Services and non-government agencies such as NCOSS, UnitingCare Burnside, the Salvation Army, Mission Australia and the St Vincent de Paul Society. The Committee also heard evidence from local government and non-government service providers, local schools, residents and young people (Standing Committee on Social Issues, 2006, p. ix).

At the conclusion of its Inquiry the Standing Committee handed down a total of 13 recommendations. In summary, these recommendations consisted of adequate funding and community consultation being directed towards the Macquarie Fields community action plan 2005–06. Also recommended was the formation of ‘genuine’ partnerships between government and non-government agencies servicing Macquarie Fields and the co-ordination of funding from Federal, State, local and non-government sources. Other recommendations included that research was to be undertaken concerning the impact of social disadvantage upon communities, and initiatives were to be introduced to strengthen the relationship between police and Macquarie Fields youth. Also recommended were the ongoing review of police resources and strategies in terms of civil disturbances; and the continued training of police concerning cultural and social issues encountered by members of disadvantaged communities.

It is noted that the Standing Committee did not commence the Inquiry until September 2005 as it was “… instructed by the House to delay the commencement of the Inquiry until internal police reviews into the public disturbances were completed” (Standing
Committee on Social Issues, 2006, p. ix). This report, consisting of a review of police tactics during the Macquarie Fields riots and subsequent recommendations, was tabled by the NSWP in June 2005. The Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006) observed that following their internal review, NSWP made numerous recommendations with regard to future responses to civil disturbances, consisting of the training of staff and deployment of resources, all of which had been implemented. These included:

- Major Incident (Public Order) Commanders course for all local area commanders and duty officers;
- Operations Support Group Commanders course;
- Tactical Advisors course;
- Public Order Management Equipment training for all general duty police and new recruits;
- A Major Incident Response team, comprising various officers bringing together specialist skills and experience from NSW, deployed to all significant unplanned public order events;

In November 2005, in response to an invitation by the Standing Committee, the Police Association of NSW provided a written submission to the Inquiry concerning the police response to the Macquarie Fields riots. The Police Association of NSW stated:

The NSW Police response to the Macquarie Fields riots is yet another example of its failure to be able to consistently and professionally respond to public order incidents. Public order events such as the riots between 25 February and 4 March 2005 at Macquarie Fields were reasonably foreseeable from past
experience and are almost certain to occur at some time in the future (Police Association of NSW, 2005, p. 5).

In addition, the Police Association of NSW attributed the escalation of the riots to a lack of knowledge of police management in terms of emergency management training. It stated:

The Association also submits that critical errors in the management of the police operation led to an escalation rather than a de-escalation of the degree of risk to the police and members of the public, and that these errors were systematic rather than particular to any person or persons involved in the management of the disorder. Commanders and their delegates had no formal way of checking that the decisions they made were in line with current standard operating procedures. Difficulties were also identified with the integration of groups such as the OSG [Operations Support Group] into the decision-making processes (Police Association of NSW, 2005, p. 5).

This aforementioned submission is somewhat supported by the views of Baker (2009), who expressed the view that the Macquarie Fields riots “…highlighted deficiencies of police coercive responses” (p. 141).

Although the Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006) acknowledged that the NSWP had implemented wide-ranging strategies to improve its response to civil disturbances, during the course of its Inquiry the Committee examined “…key issues relating to resources and strategy that emerged during the Inquiry” (p. 53). In examining the police response to the Macquarie Fields riots, the Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006) did identify certain deficiencies. One such issue identified was
that insufficient information had been dispersed by the police to the community, especially young people, during the course of the riots. For instance, during the course of the hearing, the Standing Committee (2006) heard evidence from Macquarie Fields youth that during the riots local young people were not given access to the Macquarie Fields Police Youth Liaison Officer, Senior Constable Cotter. In fact, the Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006) noted that Cotter was not available to local youth "...for approximately five months during the critical time of the disturbances, due to an operational decision taken by the LAC (Local Area Command)” (p. 50). The Standing Committee (2006) expressed ‘concern’ (p. 50) at this situation and stated that “…if such events should occur again in the future, that there will be strategies in place to ensure adequate communication with the community and young people concerning the policing operations’ (p. 50).

Consequently, the Standing Committee (2006, p. xii) proposed, “Recommendation 11: That in any public order incident a strategy be implemented to ensure adequate liaison with and dissemination of information to the community”.

The Standing Committee (2006, pp. 53–55) noted evidence that in the early stages of the riots:

- General duties police were not equipped with helmets;
- Some police could not easily access water;
- Difficulties were experienced concerning radio communications amongst police; and
- There was confusion concerning the line of command amongst police supervisors.
In regards to police response to the Macquarie Fields riots the Standing Committee (2006) subsequently made the following recommendation, “Recommendation 13: That the NSW Government and police ensure the ongoing review of policy resources and strategy (p. xii)”.

It is noted that, on 15 December 2006 the New South Wales Government at the time responded to the Standing Committee’s recommendations. In terms of ‘Recommendation 11’, the NSW Government stated, “The NSW Government is currently reviewing various strategies to improve liaison and the dissemination of information to the community during a public order incident” (NSW Government, 2006, p. 14). Also, in regards to ‘Recommendation 13’, the NSW Government stated, “The NSW Government supports this recommendation. Existing NSW Police corporate policies encourage NSW Police Commands to engage in ongoing reviews of policing resources and strategies based on operational and community needs” (NSW Government, 2006, p.14).

**Description of current socio-economic factors concerning Macquarie Fields**

The Macquarie Fields suburb lies within the Campbelltown Local Government Area and occupies an area of approximately 6.9 square kilometres (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006). As previously mentioned in Chapter 3, data for this study was collected during the period 2007 to 2008. The most recent census data collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics for Macquarie Fields was in 2006. This data provides the following snapshot of the local community.
In 2006 the Macquarie Fields community comprised of 12,970 residents, 49.0% were males and 51.0% females. The population consisted of 25.4% children aged between 0-14 years. 13.6% of the population were aged between 15-24 years and 42.2% were aged between 25-54 years (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006). Australia was the country of birth for 7,700 of the residents. In terms of ‘family characteristics’ 3,310 families were residing in Macquarie Fields during 2006. They comprised 46.2% ‘couple families with children’; 22.8% ‘couple families without children’; 29.3% ‘one parent families’ and 1.7% were ‘other families’ (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006).

In regards to income of Macquarie Fields residents, Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006, p.5) reported that persons aged over 15 years had a median weekly income of $387 which was below the $466 Australian average. The median Macquarie Fields ‘weekly household income’ was $859 which was below the Australian average of $1,027. Finally, the ‘median weekly family income’ comprised of $1,005 which was below that of the Australian average of $1,171.

In terms of housing at Macquarie Fields, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006, p.7) indicated that 40.7% of private dwellings at Macquarie Fields were being rented. Approximately 30% of rental properties were rented from a real estate agent with 59.6% being rented from a Government Housing authority. This is compared to the Australian average of 50.5% of rental dwellings being rented from a real estate agent and 14.9% from a Government housing authority. Concerning employment of residents at Macquarie Fields, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006, p.4) reported that 10.6% of residents aged 15 years and over were unemployed. This is higher than the 5.2% Australian average for that period.
In terms of crime rates for Macquarie Fields, these are recorded within the New South Wales Local Government Area of Campbelltown. A total of 141 Local Government Areas in New South Wales are allocated a ranking concerning the prevalence of certain offences within their areas. In regards to traffic offences, the New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (2009) reported that in 2007, 3,309 offences were recorded by NSWP, which gave the area the 2nd highest ranking in the State. In 2008, the Campbelltown area recorded the 3rd highest ranking for traffic offences in New South Wales. During 2007, 1,327 incidents of harassment and threatening behaviour were recorded in the area, which gave the area a ranking of 7th for that offence. In regards to motor vehicle theft, during 2007, 806 incidents were reported to police, which ranked Campbelltown 18th out of 141 Local Government Areas for that offence. In 2008 this increased to 861 offences, which moved the area’s ranking to 7.

Concerning ‘Break and Enter’ offences during 2007, 1,431 incidents were reported to police which gave the area a ranking of 16th. During 2008 there was a decline in the reports of this offence to 1278 which decreased the ranking to 24th.

In regards to ‘Breaches of Apprehended Violence Orders’ for the Campbelltown Local Government Area, 557 incidents were recorded during 2007 which gave it a ranking of 15th. The ranking decreased to 34 in 2008 with 427 incidents recorded. During 2007, there were 239 ‘Robbery’ incidents which led to the area being ranked 13th. In 2008, this increased to 253 reported incidents which increased the area’s ranking to 9th. In regards to ‘Assaults’, which were domestic violence related, 1,115 incidents were reported to police during 2007. This ranked the area as being 12th in the State for that type of offence. In 2008, 992 such incidents were reported to police which led to the
area being ranked at 17th. Finally, in regards to ‘Assaults’ not related to domestic violence, 1400 incidents were recorded by police in 2007 which led to the area being ranked at number 20. In 2008, incidents dropped to 1385 which led to a decrease in the Local Government Area ranking to 21st.

In terms of the aforementioned discussion an overall picture emerges of Macquarie Fields as an economically, disadvantaged, high crime area. This was recognised by the Standing Committee (2006) which observed:

…it is noted that Macquarie Fields suffers from socio-economic disadvantage across a number of key areas, including high unemployment rates, particularly among young people, a high concentration of public housing, a high proportion of young people with low levels of educational attainment, and higher than average levels of family violence, drug and alcohol issues and mental health issues (Standing Committee, 2006, p.7).

**Silencing of local community discontent**

Although the issue of local community dissatisfaction with Macquarie Fields Police did surface within the previously discussed forums, such as media interviews with local residents and parliamentary debate recorded in Hansard, this was somewhat silenced by the political and media response to the incident. The response of politicians to the riots consisted of an overwhelming denial that social disadvantage or poor relations with police could possibly be a contributing factor to the riot’s causation. For instance, the New South Wales Premier at the time, Mr. Bob Carr, when asked in Parliament to articulate the government’s response to community concerns about the attacks on police at Macquarie Fields, responded:
These people consciously and deliberately chose to commit crimes. There is no excuse for that, either in the events of last Friday night or in the social conditions in the area…. To excuse the criminal behaviour of these few dozen louts is to insult each of those thousands of families who, in a tough area, bring their kids up well, send them to school, support their community and respect the police (Hansard, 2005, p.14313).

The former New South Wales Police Minister, Carl Scully, expressed similar views when he addressed Parliament. Scully argued:

It is intolerable for people to behave in this way. I am not going to have it said that because they are poor, because they have been denied opportunities that others take for granted, that it is an excuse for lawlessness… There is no excuse for that type of behaviour. The vast majority of people in Macquarie Fields are law-abiding, hard working citizens….A number of residents have told me they support the actions taken by the police… The local member, who knows many of the officers in the area, appreciates the work they have done. Members of the community have told him they welcome the police in their area. In fact, they look to the police to maintain safety and order in the streets of Macquarie Fields (Hansard, 2005, p.14340).

The presiding New South Wales Government also maintained its stance through the media, that the actions of the Macquarie Fields rioters were inexcusable and without reason. For instance, Das (2005) reported in The Age newspaper Mr Carr as stating, “There are no excuses for this behaviour and I am not going to have it said that this behaviour is caused by social disadvantage”. Whereas Squires (2005) in The New
Zealand Herald reported Mr Bob Carr as stating, “I will not have it said this behaviour is caused by social disadvantage”. These aforementioned comments were not only confined at the time to the Government. The New South Wales Police Commissioner at the time, Mr Ken Moroney echoed similar views when he stated in an interview for the Herald Sun, “These hoodlums lack respect for the community but perhaps more importantly they lack respect for themselves. They are setting themselves up to be the next group of inmates at Long Bay” (Sofios & Saleh, 2005).

The State Opposition also entered into the debate concerning the riots. Whilst the Opposition attacked the Government, citing the riots as an example of the Government’s soft approach to law and order issues and its insufficient allocation of police personnel to Macquarie fields, it also contributed to the theme of attributing causation of the riots to the irresponsible action of a small number of thugs. For example, during Parliamentary question time, New South Wales Liberal MP, Peter Debnam stated, “…the problem in Macquarie Fields is the criminal and thugs, who have not been arrested by the Carr Government…We need law and order on the streets of Macquarie Fields; we need police on the streets interacting with the community” (Hansard, 2005, p.14341).

In addition to the Government and Opposition, some sections of the media also attributed the origins of the riots to the actions of a small number of criminals. For instance, the Sydney Morning Herald columnist, Miranda Devine (2005) argued that a solution to the riots at Macquarie Fields could be found in local police employing zero tolerance policing.
As previously mentioned, the overwhelming response of politicians, police and sections of the media was to attribute the causation of the riots solely to the actions of a small number of criminal thugs. This response was observed and commented upon by academics such as Lee (2006), Weatherburn (2006) and Owen (2006). For instance, Lee (2006) observed:

> The overwhelming public and political response to the ‘riot’ was one of apportioning blame squarely with the ‘lawless rioters’. There was also an explicit denial that social exclusion, disadvantage or poverty could in any way be even partially responsible for the mayhem (Lee, 2006, p.35).

Similarly, Weatherburn (2006) argued that the reaction of the politicians to the riots was one of attributing its causation to the actions of “lawless self-seeking criminals” (p.20). Weatherburn (2006) also observed that there was a denial by politicians that “social and economic disadvantage” (p.20) could be a contributing factor and this political response was borne from a reluctance to be perceived by the public as being empathetic to the plight of the rioters. Owen (2006) supported the views of Lee and Weatherburn and argued, “Between the media and conservative NSW politicians, the crowd had been dealt a swift serving of vilification aimed at minimizing any support that might arise due to similar circumstances in other areas” (Owen, 2006, p.8).

In the wake of an almost unanimous blaming by politicians that the riots were caused by a small number of criminals, the next section examines the views of academics concerning the causation of the Macquarie Fields riots. In addition, attention will then turn to briefly examine recent riots which have occurred in similar western democracies namely, Brixton during 1981 and the 1967 American race riots. The views
of academics will be discussed concerning the causation of those riots. It will be proposed that similarities exist between these aforementioned riots and the Macquarie Fields riots in terms of various social conditions and policing practices being causative factors of the disturbances.

**Causes of the Macquarie Fields riots**

The aforementioned section considered the views of academics concerning the political response to the riots. This section considers the causes of the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots, the 1981 Brixton riots and the 1967 American riots. It will be proposed that similarities exist between these three riots in terms of the socio-economic deprivation of residents and poor police interactions with the communities as being predominant contributing factors to such riots.

Following the Macquarie Fields riots a number of Australian academics considered possible causes of the civil unrest. For example, Lee (2006) in searching for possible explanations to the riots, referred to the findings of a previous study he conducted at Macquarie Fields during the period 2002 to 2003. This qualitative research involved the interviewing of twenty one participants consisting of fourteen residents, four service providers and three local police. He discovered that there were a number of pre-existing social conditions which led to residents feeling neglected by the Government and the local police. These themes included, “boredom, public transport, services, community renewal, education, police and community violence” (p.39). Interviews with residents discovered that, as a result of their dissatisfaction with the level of the previously mentioned services, they “felt isolated, geographically, economically and socially” (p.47) and that these feelings of neglect and helplessness
had been festering for a number of years, in the lead up to the riots. He also found “boredom of young people” (p.40) and “community violence” (p.45) as contributing factors to the local residents’ dissatisfaction with the social environment in which they lived. In regards to the policing of local Macquarie Fields community, Lee (2006) noted that residents were concerned with inconsistent police practices occurring at Macquarie Fields. These consisted of police displaying a blasé attitude to significant crimes such as break, enter and steal offences; but on the other hand, displaying an over-reaction to relatively minor matters which was suggestive of ‘zero tolerance’ policing practices (p.44).

Lee (2006) also noted that residents expressed the views that they did not feel involved in the community oriented policing process. He concluded that, “…the so-called riots were not simply as a result of bad, criminal or misguided young people choosing to attack police…. rather, discontent on the estate had been simmering for years “(Lee, 2006, p.47).

Lee’s (2006) findings were supported by Weatherburn (2006), Director of the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research who contended that a “build up in anger, resentment and frustration among the local community” (p.23) had been a contributing factor to the 2005 riots. However, whilst Lee’s (2006) research identified community discontent leading up to the riots being caused by inconsistent policing practices and the inadequate provision of government services, Weatherburn (2006) proposed that the build-up of community anger leading up to the riots was attributed to factors relating directly to the policing of the local community. He proposed a model in which he explained the existence of “two general conditions” (p.23) which triggered the 2005
riots. The first condition related to the policing of the community and consisted of the residents experiencing a “build up in anger, resentment and frustration” (p.23). The second condition was identified as being “an event that serves as a flashpoint for the discharge of this anger” (Weatherburn, 2006, p.23). In examining the build-up of community anger, Weatherburn (2006) identified that the local community members possessed:

…a high level of fear or anger about crime, chronically poor or unhelpful response to calls for police assistance, widespread anxiety about the possibility of being arrested, detained and possibly imprisoned for involvement in crime, widespread anger about what is perceived to be discriminatory, unfair or unduly oppressive policing and a pervading sense of social exclusion from the wider community (Weatherburn, 2006, p.24).

In regards to Weatherburn’s (2006) assertion that residents were concerned about crime, inadequate levels of police service and the possibility of arrest, he suggested evidence of such could be found in Lee’s (2006) research as well as in newspaper articles containing interviews with local community members published around the time of the riots. In terms of oppressive policing, Weatherburn (2006) noted that in high crime rate communities such as Macquarie Fields, police, through internal review committees such as the Operations and Crime Review Panels, are pressured to implement strategies to reduce local crime rates. In an effort to bring down such rates, police target offenders and anyone else they suspect as being involved in crime. Weatherburn (2006) also argued that the Operations and Crime Review Panels can impact negatively upon police practice because police, “under intense pressure to bring down crime react by adopting more aggressive and confrontational styles of policing”
In regards to the second ‘condition’ of the proposed model, an incident which serves as a catalyst to ignite public anger, the fatal car crash following the police pursuit was cited as being such an incident. “Add a generalized sense of social exclusion and all it takes is a hot day or perceived injustice to bring on a full scale riot” (Weatherburn, 2006, p.27).

In addition to the research findings of Lee (2006) and views expressed by Weatherburn (2006), another academic, Owen (2006) from the University of New England, in examining “the case of Macquarie Fields from the perspective of the protesting crowd’s moral indignation” (p.5) also articulated similar views and identified the issue of poor police-community relations as being a contributing factor to the Macquarie Fields riots. Owen (2006) however identified that the police-community relationship leading up to the riots was one of “mutual suspicion” (p.9) and the riots were borne out of “moral indignation” (p.9). In regards to the issue of ‘mutual suspicion’ he argued that indicators, such as Macquarie Fields’ high crime rate and a subsequent demand for increased police numbers, could suggest that “police might quite naturally see certain groups within the community as potential offenders” (Owen, 2006, p.11). In regards to community suspicion of police, Owen (2006) referred to various media reports following the riots which indicated the resident’s suspicions and dissatisfaction with the services of local police.

Owen’s (2006) model suggests that the local police and the community, leading up to the riots, shared a relationship characterized by mistrust, but there also existed a tolerance of one another which the author referred to as the “line in the sand” (p.12). He argued however that the local residents’ acceptance of tolerated police behaviour
was perceived by some locals as having been transgressed when the two youths died whilst fleeing police. According to the author, the motor vehicle accident which killed the two Macquarie Fields youths was the catalyst for the community’s “moral indignation” as “reports circulated in the community of a young police officer approaching the wrecked vehicle with his firearm drawn.” (Owen, 2006, p.9) and community members, fearing that the driver Jesse Kelly was about to be harmed, attacked the police, allowing him an opportunity to escape. Also, the author observed that the crowd throwing objects at the police was an expression of their moral indignation concerning the deaths of the two young men.

In addition to the views expressed by Australian academics concerning the precipitating factors of the Macquarie Fields riots, it is also instructive to examine similar events of civil unrest that have occurred in recent times in England during 1981 and America during 1967, and to identify the causative factors which led to these riots. These two particular riots have been chosen, as it is contended that they share common themes with the Macquarie Fields riots. These themes include, communities in which members experience significant socio-economic hardship, aggressive policing practices that have led to poor police-community relations and precipitating events that have acted as a trigger for the civil unrest. It is hoped that by examining the 1981 Brixton and 1967 American riots and their ensuing commissions of inquiry, common themes with the Macquarie Fields riot can be identified and a better understanding developed concerning the causative factors that led to the Macquarie Fields riots.
**Brixton riots of 1981**

From 10–12 April 1981 riots erupted in Brixton, London, involving a few hundred young people against the police. Scraton (2004) observed that the protestors’ “main target was the Metropolitan police” (p. 51). The presiding Government at the time ordered an inquiry and the subsequent Scarman Inquiry (1981) was commissioned to examine the underlying causes of the riots. In examining the extent of the riots, Lord Scarman observed that youths had attacked police with “stones, bricks, iron bars and petrol bombs” (p. 13). Waddington (1992) commented “In total 145 buildings were damaged, 207 vehicles were damaged or destroyed, 450 people were reported injured and 354 arrests were made. It had been necessary to deploy 7,300 officers to put down the riots” (p. 82).

Scarman (1981) identified that the following police-community encounters acted as triggers which ignited the civil unrest. On the 10 April, 1981 a young black stabbing victim, whilst trying to escape from his attackers, came under the notice of police patrolling the streets of Brixton. Police attempted to administer first aid, but they were attacked by a crowd of onlookers who carried the youth away for medical attention. The youth later discharged himself from the hospital. On the following day as false rumours circulated concerning the death of the youth at the hands of the police, officers were conducting an operation in which residents, who were on the streets of Brixton, were stopped and searched by police. Two plainclothes police officers involved in the operation stopped and spoke to a taxi driver whom they suspected of carrying drugs. The man was subsequently arrested by police which led to a violent response and rioting by some members of the local community.
The Scarman Inquiry (1981) found that whilst the two aforementioned initial incidences of police-citizen contact were of a rather innocuous nature, they nevertheless initiated a violent response from community members against the police. Scarman (1981) discovered that this riotous behaviour was due to the existence of a number of underlying socio-economic and policing factors which had become a source of frustration and anger for local residents over a number of years leading up to the riots. In regards to socio-economic factors, Lord Scarman (1981) discovered that young people, particularly blacks, growing up in Brixton were subjected to economic and social deprivation. Scarman (1981, p.20) subsequently found that factors such as, “lack of leisure and recreational facilities, low income households, a large number of one parent households, high levels of unemployment” were turning many of the youths to pursue a life of crime on the streets.

Scarman (1981) also identified that residents of Brixton were, at times, subjected to hard police practices which created a gap between the community and their local police. For instance, Lord Scarman (1981) found that leading up to the riots there had been a breakdown in the relationship between the Brixton community and the local police which had led to a state of “mutual suspicion” (p.79). In particular, Scarman (1981) found that over a number of years leading up to the riots, police were involved in stop and search street operations, code named ‘Operation Swamp’. These operations involved police stopping and searching young people on the streets of Brixton. Scarman (1981, p.87) observed that during one of these operations many young black people were stopped and searched. He found this, “provoked hostility of young black people who felt they were being hunted irrespective of their innocence or guilt”. Scarman (1981) argued that the damage to police-community relations leading up to
the riots was not caused by the existence of the police street operations, but rather the way in which police conducted themselves. For instance, evidence deposed by residents before the Scarman Inquiry indicated that police, whilst undertaking ‘Operation Swamp’ exercises, were disrespectful and rude to community members.

Scarman (1981) observed:

> When police are conducting stop and search exercises black persons object not to being stopped or searched but the way in which it is done. The police method is without respect deliberately provocative and insulting and designed to strip the individual of whatever dignity he may possess (Scarman, 1981, P.136).

In addition, Scarman (1981) found that not only did this hard style of policing create ill feeling between the youth and police, it also impacted upon the attitudes and subsequent support of older community members, “who hearing the stories of many innocent young people who had been stopped and searched began themselves to lose confidence in, and respect for, the police” (p. 87).

Scarman (1981) concluded that:

> Nothing that I have heard or seen can excuse the unlawful behaviour of the rioters. But the police must carry some responsibility for the outbreak of disorder. First, they were partly to blame for the breakdown in community relations. Secondly, there were instances of harassment and racial prejudice among junior officers on the streets of Brixton, which gave credibility and substance to the arguments of the police critics. Thirdly, there was a failure to adjust [policies and methods to meet the needs of policing a multiracial society (Scarman, 1981, p.118).
Various academics have commented upon the findings and recommendations of the Scarman Inquiry. For instance, Scraton (2004) found that concerning police management, including recruitment and training, the Scarman Inquiry “had a profound impact on policing and police-community relations” (p. 51). In addition, Lea (2004) argued that Scarman had rightly recognised that young people required “gainful employment” (p. 194) and “suitable educational recreational and leisure opportunities” (p. 195) in order to secure social stability. In addition, Boateng (1984) agreed with Lord Scarman’s identification of police tactics undertaken in ‘Operation Swamp’ as a causative factor in the local community hostility.

However, there were also criticisms of the findings and recommendations of the Scarman Inquiry. For instance, Scraton (2004) argued that Scarman had failed to address the issue of police “institutionalised racism” (p. 51) as the inquiry had found no evidence of ‘deliberate bias or prejudice’ (p. 51). Scraton (2002) considered this was a flawed finding as a Police Studies Institute Report of 1983 had “exposed the extent to which Scarman’s view of racism had been blinkered” (p. 52) and that the Police Studies Institute had in fact discovered that “racial harassment and racial violence were not taken seriously at a senior command level and that racism led to routinely aggressive and intimidatory policing” (p. 52). In addition, another academic, Benyon (1984), expressed the view that the Scarman Inquiry should have heard evidence from rioters and that the Inquiry had failed to put in place steps that would ensure that its recommendations would be facilitated.
It is contended that the Brixton riots of 1981 and the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots share three common underlying features being; communities suffering from social and economic deprivation, an ongoing history of poor police-community relations and, finally, events which involved community members’ interaction with police which in turn acted as a precipitator to the respective riots. In regards to the common factor of social and economic deprivation, the Scarman Report (1981) identified this social condition as an underlying contributing factor to the Brixton riots. In regards to the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots, this was also identified by the New South Wales Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006) & Lee (2006) as a contributing factor.

Concerning the second common factor which contributed to the riots, a history of poor police community relations, Scarman (1981) identified that the stop and search exercises code named ‘Operation Swamp’, which were conducted by police upon Brixton residents had a detrimental effect on police-community relations. This feature of ongoing poor police community relations was also identified by Lee (2006), Weatherburn (2006), Owen (2006) and the New South Wales Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006) as being a contributing factor to the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots. For example, Lee (2006) identified poor police-community relations at Macquarie Fields as having its foundations in inconsistent practices which involved police not only appearing to show a lack of interest concerning serious crime but also to over reacting concerning minor matters. In addition, Weatherburn (2006) suggested police attempts to bring down crime at Macquarie Fields, which emanated from the demands generated by Crime Review Panels, may have impacted adversely upon police practices making them more aggressive.
The third contended common feature, a trigger event involving police-community members’ interaction, was, in regards to the Brixton riots, police attempting to assist a young black stabbing victim followed by the arrest of a black taxi driver on drug charges (Scarman, 1981). In regards to the Macquarie Fields riots, the trigger was the deaths of the two young people following the police pursuit (Weatherburn, 2006). It is noted however, in regards to Macquarie Fields, that Owen (2006) suggested the car accident resulting in the deaths of the youths caused an outpouring of moral outrage as opposed to a routine police-citizen encounter acting as a trigger point.

It is also noted that whilst the participants in the Macquarie Fields riots were not of a particular minority racial group, the participants in the Brixton riots consisted mainly of black youth. However, Scarman (1981) observed that, “There was a strong racial element in the disorders but they were not a race riot. In the riots were essentially an outburst of anger and resentment by young black people against the police” (Scarman, 1981, p.196).
American race riots of 1967

In terms of this present study, which examines police accountability at Macquarie Fields following the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots, it is also beneficial to note and compare the contributing factors of the race riots which occurred in the American cities of Harlem, Watts, Newark and Detroit during 1967, which cost the lives of eighty citizens, and to draw any similarities between these riots and those which occurred at Macquarie Fields. During the Watts riot thirty five people died, the Newark riot claimed twenty three lives and forty three people perished as a result of the Detroit riots (Waddington, 1992).

Following the 1967 American race riots the Kerner Commission was formed in 1968 to investigate its causation. Unlike the Brixton riots the Kerner Commission gathered evidence from rioters which Benyon (1984) argued added, “an important dimension to the analysis”. The Kerner Commission (1968) found that the riots involving “American Negroes” now referred to as African Americans was borne out of a number of underlying factors which adversely impacted upon the lives of African Americans and contributed to the causation of the riots. These factors included “pervasive discrimination and segregation, black ghettos, frustrated hopes, powerlessness, incitement and encouragement of violence and the police” (p.203).

In regards to socio-economic deprivation, the Kerner Commission (1968) found that the American cities which experienced civil disturbances contained African American communities which suffered from socio economic hardship including; high unemployment, poverty, high crime rates and poor standards of health. In addition, the Commission found that inappropriate police practices played a substantive role in the
causation of the 1967 riots. For instance, Kerner (1968) discovered that African Americans residing in disadvantaged neighbourhoods perceived that police brutalized and harassed them and this was “one of the major reasons for intense Negro resentment against the police” (p.158). Further, evidence presented before the Inquiry suggested that within those communities where the riots had occurred there had been a history of police disrespect and harassment towards African Americans residing in those particular communities. Kerner (1968) observed:

…in nearly every city surveyed, the commission heard complaints of harassment of interracial couples, dispersal of social street gatherings and the stopping of Negroes on foot or in cars without obvious basis. These, together with contemptuous and degrading verbal abuse, have great impact in the ghetto… some conduct, breaking up of street groups, indiscriminate stops and searchers – is frequently directed at youths, creating special tensions in the ghetto where the average age is generally under 21 (Kerner, 1968, p.159).

Kerner (1968) also considered that whilst police departments may be genuine in their attempts to ensure the proper conduct of police, departmental policies may inadvertently foster practices of harassment. Kerner (1968, p.304) provided the example of “aggressive preventive patrols” (p.158) as being one such practice in which police undertake special operations in a particular area and perform indiscriminate stop and search procedures on community members. Furthermore, Kerner (1968) found that the precipitating event which caused the riots consisted of a minor routine police procedure.

Kerner (1968) commented, “…almost invariably the incident that ignites disorder arise from police action. Harlem, Watts, Newark and Detroit – all of the major outbursts of
recent years—were precipitated by routine arrests of Negroes and minor offences by white police” (Kerner, 1968, p.93).

It is instructive to note that a number of academics have identified similarities between the 1981 Brixton riots and the 1967 American race riots. Waddington (1992) suggested they shared common features which involved “…relatively powerless sections of society experience a shattering denial of something they feel legitimately entitled to” and the “weight of state repression” (p. 94). Field and Southgate (1982) also found similarities which included ‘high rates of unemployment, police practices and housing conditions’ (p. 6). In addition, police ‘action’ (Field & Southgate, 1982, p. 22) was also identified as the precipitator for the riots.

It is further contended that the American riots, in turn, share common characteristics with the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots. These include economic deprivation, which was identified by the Kerner Commission as a contributing factor to the American race riots and also identified by the New South Wales Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006) and Lee (2006) as contributors to the Macquarie Fields riots. Secondly, The Kerner Commission identified that African American residents perceived that police were harsh and harassed them during interactions. In terms of the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots, poor police-community relations were also identified as a contributing factor (Lee, 2006; New South Wales Standing Committee on Social Issues, 2006; Owen, 2006; Weatherburn, 2006). Thirdly, the Kerner Commission (1968) found that minor routine police procedures involving contact with community members acted as precipitators to the outbreak of violence. This factor was also identified by Weatherburn (2006) as being a trigger to the Macquarie Fields riots.
Summary

This chapter has provided a description of the Macquarie Fields riots. Furthermore, it has examined the police response to the Macquarie Fields riots through the findings and recommendations of the Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006). Also provided is a description of the socio-economic factors concerning Macquarie fields. This included 2006 census data for Macquarie Fields and crime figures pertaining to the Campbelltown Local Government Area for the period 2007 to 2008. In addition, this chapter has discussed that the overall response to the Macquarie Fields riots by the presiding government, opposition, and media was to attribute blame to a handful of criminals. It is argued however, that the American, Brixton and Macquarie Fields riots share common underlying features in terms of causation. These features include the existence of communities in which the members suffered from poor socio economic conditions. In addition, certain community members were subjected to harsh police crime tactics involving indiscriminate stop and search practices. Another common factor was the existence of a routine police encounter with community members which served as a trigger event, precipitating the riots. The following chapter, Chapter five provides a discussion of community policing at Macquarie Fields with a particular focus on describing and assessing the processes and structures.
CHAPTER 5

STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES IN RELATION TO COMMUNITY POLICING AT MACQUARIE FIELDS

Introduction

Chapter Five describes and assesses the structures and processes in relation to community policing at Macquarie Fields. This is set against the backdrop of evidence deposed by New South Wales Police before the New South Wales Parliamentary Standing Committee concerning community policing initiatives implemented by Macquarie Fields Police prior to and following the February, 2005 riots. Also examined is the relationship between police and residents prior to and after the riots. Particular attention is paid to evidence deposed by the Government and NSWP claiming that relations have improved between the police and locals. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Social Issues findings and recommendations concerning police-community relations at Macquarie Fields are also examined.

Community policing initiatives implemented at Macquarie Fields prior to and following the 2005 riots

The following discussion looks at police efforts to implement community-policing initiatives at Macquarie Fields prior to and following the 2005 riots. This is set against the previously discussed backdrop that evidence of community dissatisfaction leading up to and following the riots was exposed through the media, the final report of the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006), Parliamentary debate and research conducted by Lee (2006); Weatherburn (2006) and Owen (2006).
However, evidence presented before the Parliamentary Standing Committee into the Macquarie Fields riots would appear to indicate that efforts by the New South Wales Government and senior police to improve relations between local police and the Macquarie fields’ community had been undertaken. This section focuses upon policies and programs implemented at Macquarie Fields prior to and following the February 2005, riots by NSWP in an effort to improve community relations.

In terms of community-policing initiatives implemented prior to the 2005 riots, Senior Constable Chris Cotter, a police-youth liaison officer, attached to Macquarie Fields at the time, gave evidence before the Standing Committee on Social Issues concerning a referral initiative for troubled youth. He stated:

That is really alluding to the Positive Choices program, which we set up in 2003-the Premier funded the program with about $4,600- to run interventions for kids at risk of offending, not so much committing criminal offences, but kids who are going down the wrong track. It could be through the schools, the community or another organisation that feel the kids need help before something happens. We take on referrals. We developed a referral sheet as part of the Positive Choices program, which started off through a conference process with the parents and a cultural support person present, but it developed and we have to take groups of kids because they do not act out alone but with groups. We started running a whole day program at the PCYC engaging them in activities to do with trust, self-esteem and building trust between the police. That is what we try to do with Positive Choices and how we deal with referrals (Senior Constable Christopher Cotter, Evidence 13 December, 2005, p.23).
In addition, a submission to the Standing Committee by Campbelltown City Council observed:

From Council’s perspective the Macquarie Fields Local Area Command takes a proactive and co-operative approach in their role in the community. This is evident by their partnership with council in a number of initiatives:

- Police Accountability Community Teams (PACT) is a forum for the community to express its views about police visibility, police deployment and crime generally. It also enables local communities to hold local Police Commanders accountable for crime reduction. Council has been an active participant in the Macquarie Fields PACT meetings since its implementation in February 2002 (Submission 12, Campbelltown City Council, 2006, p.2).

In terms of community policing initiatives implemented after the February, 2005 riots, Superintendent Wilkins, who was appointed Local Area Commander shortly following the riots, gave evidence that Macquarie Fields police were involving the local community in solving crime problems. He mentioned:

> We now consult considerably with the community. We run a number of programs. We consult with the non-government organisations as well. But one of the important things we are doing is giving the community ownership of some of the problems in the area. I think someone spoke to you about an issue at Minto recently which involved the murder of a young chap and there was significant tension. We responded in two ways: by community consultation and by giving some ownership to the community leaders and elders to take control of a potentially volatile situation – as a preventative measure, rather than going
in tactfully to resolve the issue (Superintendent Stuart Wilkins, Evidence 13 December 2005, pp. 18-19).

Wilkins also deposed evidence that Macquarie Fields police had recently introduced such initiatives as identifying young people at risk from the Pacific Islander community and implementing a case management program to help prevent them entering the criminal justice system. Other initiatives highlighted by Wilkins included, the referral of young people to Mission Australia, the planned introduction of a “whole of organization” (2005, p.19) approach, involving the Department of Community Services, Department of Education and Training and Department of Housing, to assist Pacific Islander families, and the future development of an all government agency plan to deal with case management processes.

In addition, Senior Constable Chris Cotter gave evidence of recent community policing initiatives which included the introduction of a program whereby offending youths were taken on a camp which was also attended by various officers including local police and Police Citizen Youth Club personnel. Cotter articulated that the intention of the camp was for police to listen to issues raised by the youth and to, “…gain an insight into why those young people offended and to discover how police could best respond to those issues” (2005, p.20). Other initiatives identified by Senior Constable Cotter included the involvement of police from the local Police Citizen Youth Clubs, implementing a program titled ‘Priority One and Priority Two’ in which offending youths were referred from the Macquarie Fields Detectives office to the Police Citizens Youth Clubs who, in partnership with government and non government agencies, conduct various programs for those youths.
In addition to the evidence deposed by local Macquarie Fields police, the NSWP Assistant Commissioner at the time, Dennis Clifford, provided evidence that local police accepted referrals from schools and various community groups concerning young people displaying offensive behavior. He stated:

Some of the work that is being undertaken out there is working directly with the Pacifica Support Service, Mission Australia regarding Pacific Islander youth who are engaging in criminal activity. Police act as a referral agency under that program. The Salvation Army Macquarie Fields assists with young children at risk and referral to police and visits by police to the Salvation Army Centre at Macquarie Fields...Police accept referrals from schools or community groups about young person [sic] displaying offensive type behaviour (Assistant Commissioner Denis Clifford, Evidence 5 December 2005, p.25).

Further to evidence given by NSWP to the Standing Committee on Social Issues Superintendent Wilkins also provided examples during an interview with the Sydney Morning Herald of community policing initiatives implemented following his appointment at Macquarie Fields in June, 2005, some four months following the riots. He mentioned:

One of the first things I did was to re-start a strong interaction with the community. We’ve started community barbecues, visited school fairs, celebrated a 30-year birthday for the local school, taken crews and trucks to show the kids, given them [temporary] tattoos, taken kids on camps – its about being out and about, being seen (Totaro, 2006).
In its final report released in June, 2006 the Standing Committee observed that a number of community policing initiatives had been implemented by the Macquarie Fields police following the February, 2005 riots. The Committee commented:

The Committee heard that local police, particularly through the youth liaison officer, were attempting to cultivate an improved relationship with local young people. One of the most positive steps was the recent establishment of a Youth Advisory Council to allow police officers and representatives of a diverse range of young people to be able to meet and discuss issues of importance relating to the policing of Macquarie Fields LAC (Standing Committee on Social Issues, 2006, p.46).

In addition, the Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006) acknowledged another initiative implemented by Macquarie Fields police in an attempt to improve its relationship with the local community following the riots. The Committee observed:

As a result of the disturbances the police established Camp Impact whereby seven police officers took nine young men involved in the disturbances and the criminal justice system on a camp for recreation and to address issues as to why they behaved a certain way during the disturbances, and to allow them to become familiar and develop a relationship with officers in the LAC with whom they may not have had previous contact (Standing Committee on Social Issues, 2006, p.46).

More recently reported community policing initiatives implemented at Macquarie Fields include the use of ‘facebook’ to inform residents concerning local crime matters. Gorrey, a columnist with the Macarthur Advertiser reported:
Police officers at Macquarie Fields are the latest cops to take to social networking site Facebook to inform the community about crime. And they want you to be their “friend”. The profile is part of project Eyewatch a reinvigorated version of Neighbourhood Watch that enables police and residents to exchange information about crime and safety online…Macquarie Fields commander Sean Gersbach said the online program was more accessible for people who could not attend community meetings. “They can simply jump online at their own convenience and share information,” Superintendent Gersbach said. Detective Senior Sergeant Rod Cutler said police could use Facebook to inform the community about local crime and update them with crime prevention messages and police events (Gorrey, 2011).

Claims of improvements in relations between Macquarie Fields police and the local community

The previous section touched upon community policing initiatives implemented by Macquarie Fields police prior to and following the 2005 riots. From this discussion it would appear on face value that efforts have been made by Macquarie Fields police to implement community-policing initiatives. This section examines additional evidence deposed by senior police and government officials before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Social Issues which indicates an apparent belief of improved relations between local police and community members at Macquarie Fields. This however is contrasted by evidence provided by community service groups who reported ongoing tensions between police and the community.
Appearing before the Standing Committee on Social Issues, the then Commissioner, Ken Moroney, when asked during his deposition of evidence whether he thought the relationship between the police and local community was much better than in February 2005, responded:

> From my perspective, I believe so this is not an observation that I make from an office 30 to 40km distant from this location. It is a command that I visit frequently. I like to get a feel for the business community and the general community from talking to young people, talking to the police and from talking to representatives of local government. Clearly, I believe there is a demonstrable range of steps forward that have been made since that period of time (Commissioner Ken Moroney, Evidence 5 December 2005, p.34).

When further pressed by the Standing Committee concerning his confidence of improved relations between local police and the Macquarie Fields community, the Commissioner responded, “I would imagine so… I would think the overwhelming majority of people in that community and in the nearby communities have a strong working relationship with the police” (p.34).

In addition to the beliefs of the Commissioner, the Head of the Premiers Department during the riots, Colin Gellatly, gave evidence that the Government believed there had been an improvement between police and community relations since the riots. He stated:

> The feedback we are getting from the community people is that that has changed. There is a different mood in the community about police. They are
doing things like taking young kids on camps. Eight police went along to it.

From my observations and from the reports I am getting, the relationship between police and some members of the community has improved significantly (Colin Gellatly, Evidence 5 December 2005, p.12).

These aforementioned statements which indicate improved police-community relations at Macquarie Fields following the riots are in disparity to evidence tendered before the Standing Committee which indicates the existence of continuing poor police-community relations following the riots. For instance, a submission from the Northern Campbelltown Community Action Group received by the Standing Committee on the 8 November, 2005, eight months after the riots stated:

The style of the police response has left a negative legacy for the relationship between residents and he police…Despite all that has happened, local people feel the police do not really listen to or respect community members. One resident who attended a community forum in October said of the police: “It seemed like they didn’t really want to hear what we had to say” (Submission 6, Northern Campbelltown Community Action Group, 2005, p.1).

Also, a submission to the Standing Committee from the Macquarie Fields Women’s Action Group received by the Standing Committee on the 9 November, 2005 indicated:

Many of the police at Macquarie Fields have a lack of understanding of the social issues and stress factors confronting the community. New police to the local command are often drawn into the existing negative police culture. There are some good police but they often get worn down by existing negative police attitudes….Police often speak to the community unacceptably eg calling them
names such as houso trog, dole bluger etc. [sic] but if the community says anything disrespectful, they get charged (Submission 15, Macquarie Fields Women’s Action Group, 2005, p.1).

Standing Committee on Social Issues findings and recommendations

The previous sections considered local community dissatisfaction leading up to the Macquarie Fields riots. It also considered that discontent was somewhat silenced by the political and media response to the incident. In addition, efforts of police management to implement community policing initiatives following the riots were also considered. It would appear that these initiatives have contributed somewhat to the belief of police management that there has been an improvement in police-community relations at Macquarie Fields. This is in contrast to evidence presented to the Standing Committee by various community service groups. This section examines the findings and recommendations of the Standing Committee (2006). In regards to the police interaction with the local community prior to the riots, it is instructive to note that the Standing Committee (2006) observed:

…arising out of the local community’s relationship with the police are several factors that were identified as contributing to the disturbances. As previously noted there is a historically strained relationship between the community and the police. Many of the local young people with whom the Committee met expressed the view that the disturbances were waiting to happen due to the ongoing and mounting tension between the police and the community (Standing Committee on Social Issues, 2006, p.48).
In addition, the Standing Committee (2006) found:

The relationship between young people and the police is frequently strained. During the course of the Inquiry the Committee met with a group of young people from Macquarie Fields. Many of the young people felt that they were constantly being harassed by the police, that they were not being given a chance, were frequently asked to move on when they are congregating with friends – the example was provided of a football game where a large group was asked to move on – and are often provoked by the police into acting inappropriately (Standing Committee on Social Issues, 2006, p.46).

As a result, the Standing Committee expressed its desire for an improved relationship between local community and police and stated, “...the Committee is hopeful that the factors raised as having contributed to the disturbances will be addressed by the improving relationship between local police, residents, and young people” (Standing Committee on Social Issues, 2006, p.48).

As previously mentioned, the Standing Committee (2006) in its final report handed down a total of thirteen recommendations four of which included:

Recommendation 2
That the implementation of the Community Action Plan in Macquarie Fields involve a strategy to ensure adequate consultation with the community and involvement of the community in decision making processes.

Recommendation 4
That the NSW Government, through the Macquarie Fields Community Action Plan and the Campbelltown Coordination Group, take all possible steps to
achieve genuine partnerships between government agencies at all levels of government.

Recommendation 10

That the NSW Government and police continue to develop, support and adequately resource initiatives to strengthen relationships with local young people.

Recommendation 12

That NSW police provide continuing training to officers to heighten awareness of the cultural and social issues faced in disadvantaged communities (Standing Committee on Social Issues, 2006, pp.xi-xii).

In terms of the ‘Community Action Plan’ referred to in Recommendations ‘2’ & ‘4’ in its submission to the Standing Committee, The Cabinet Office New South Wales stated:

The Macquarie Fields Community and Government Action Plan, 2005-2006 brings together plans and community consultations undertaken by governments and other organisations with the people of Macquarie Fields over the last three years. Many programs and strategies undertaken to date and/or included in the Plan are either those that have been proven to be effective in other instances or build upon existing programs/opportunities (Submission 19, The Cabinet Office New South Wales, 2005, p.64).

The recommendations of the Standing Committee on Social Issues were accepted and adopted by the presiding NSW Government at the time. For instance, in terms of Recommendation ‘2’ the Government stated, “The NSW Government remains committed to working with the Macquarie Fields community, in partnership with the
Campbelltown City Council and other key stakeholders, and to involving the community in making decisions that affect the Macquarie Fields area” (NSW Government, 2006, p. 4). Recommendation ‘4’ was also met with the approval of the NSW Government who replied, “The NSW Government is committed to supporting the development and maintenance of genuine partnerships across all levels of government, and between government and non-government agencies, in order to ensure that people can access the support they need when they need it” (NSW Government, 2006, p. 6).

The Government further voiced its agreement with the Standing Committee when it responded to Recommendation ‘10’ by stating, “The NSW Government and NSW Police supports this recommendation. The Government is committed to promoting strong and robust relationships with the young people of the Macquarie Fields area to create a resilient community and contribute to positive community outcomes” (NSW Government, 2006, p. 13).

Furthermore, Recommendation ‘12’ of the Standing Committee received similar Government support. The Government responded:

The NSW Government supports this recommendation…The Macquarie Fields Local Area Command has developed an additional training package to address the specific needs of the area. Police at Macquarie Fields now participate in an induction course including field training upon arrival and ongoing training as well as workshops as part of the youth mentoring program (NSW Government, 2006, p.15).
These aforementioned recommendations of the Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006) and Government endorsement are of relevance in terms of this present study’s research question. As previously mentioned, this study poses the question - *Have community policing initiatives changed police perceptions of accountability in Macquarie Fields and have they led to better police-community relations?* It has been noted that the Standing Committee (2006) after hearing evidence from community members, local community government/non government service providers, Government representatives and police, found that police/community relations were strained in Macquarie Fields, particularly in regards to the local police and young people. It recommended, “police continue to develop, support and adequately resource initiatives to strengthen relationships with local young people” (Standing Committee on Social Issues, 2006, p.xii). Part of this study seeks to discover whether the community policing initiatives implemented after the riots have in fact led to an improvement in police-community relations.

**Indicators suggesting that police-community relations since the 2005 riots remain problematic**

Notwithstanding, evidence from NSWP management as to the implementation of community policing initiatives since the riots and their belief which is also shared by the New South Wales Government that police-community relations have improved, indicators still exist which suggest that police community relations remains problematic. For instance, various media reports since 2005 tend to suggest the existence of community members’ continuing dissatisfaction with the Macquarie Fields
Police. For example on the 25 January, 2006 an article in the Sydney Morning Herald reported:

Not one woman will agree to have her name published and they are adamant they will talk only for a “positive” story. We start with the good— their continuing education, the specialist programs in schools and TAFE, the energy and desire of local people to improve the loss of the children and community— but it is the frustration that ends up dominating their conversation. They can’t help but tell of local police ignoring calls for aid, of an entrenched social vilification and discrimination based on where they live. One describes eloquently her dismissive treatment at the hands of the local sergeant until he learned she was also on a neighbourhood advisory committee… One woman says she has a police scanner – not uncommon in Macquarie Fields – and listens to it avidly. “The other day, Polair [ helicopter] was up and an Aboriginal man had crashed a stolen car in the area,” she says. “I heard them say he was ‘running in true blackfella style…he’s left his shoes in the car’. She tells the story less to highlight its clear racism but as an anecdote to show how visible police operations are and how things like the noise of the chopper night after night affect daily cycles as well as sleep (Totaro, 2006).

Also, Yamine and Watson, columnists for the Daily Telegraph on the 4 August, 2006 provided evidence of ongoing community dissatisfaction with local police and reported:

Jan Nicholl, a youth worker and housing commission resident for some 18 years standing, is one of those who believes few things have improved for those in the area’s housing estates…Ms Nicholl said little had really changed since
the riots. “There are still things bubbling under the surface and the young kids here…and I mean younger than those involved in the riots – are developing resentment against the police,” she said. “The same root problems that were affecting this area before the riots are still here” (Yamine & Watson, 2006).

A more recent example of possible concern regarding the actions/inactions of police at Macquarie Fields was raised during the proceedings of a coronial inquest. The Daily Telegraph on the 13 April, 2011 reported events concerning a domestic violence matter which culminated in the tragic death of a young woman. The paper stated:

When Melissa Cook went to Macquarie Fields police to file a complaint against her violent ex-husband, she thought the harassment would stop. After receiving threatening calls from her former bikie partner John Kudrytch, Melissa and her mum Jean went to police on November 20, 2008. There was an active AVO in place and the Cook family thought the harassment classified as a breach. The case wasn’t immediately dealt with. Melissa’s file is alleged to have sat in the police computer system for more than two weeks. On December 16, Kudrytch walked into a Casula BP and shot Melissa with a gun. He was later found dead. Three domestic violence case officers will take the stand today in the coronial inquest into Melissa’s death…Deputy State Coroner Scott Mitchell said he wanted to know why Melissa’s concerns weren’t taken more seriously (Chambers, 2011).

These examples of ongoing community dissatisfaction with local police are important in terms of the future stability of the Macquarie Fields community. This was
highlighted by Commissioner Moroney during his evidence before the Standing Committee on Social Issues. Commissioner Moroney stated:

Clearly I believe there is a demonstrable range of steps forward that have been made since that period of time. That does not allow me any degree of complacency at all. We have to continue that body of work and we must not lessen that body of work – “we” being the plural of all agencies of government at Commonwealth, State and local levels. Unless we maintain that with the community and individuals within the community we risk the chance of regressing to those types of events (Commissioner Ken Moroney, Evidence 5 December 2005, p.34).
Summary

This chapter has examined the structures and processes in relation to community policing at Macquarie fields. It presented evidence though the testimony of police managers before the New South Wales Parliamentary Standing Committee that an effort had been made by New South Wales police to improve police-community relations at Macquarie Fields. Furthermore, senior managers expressed the belief that as a result, relations between police and community had improved. The chapter also described the findings and recommendations of the Standing Committee on Social Issues. Finally, this chapter discussed that despite all efforts, indicators consisting of the accounts of local residents suggest that police-community relations at Macquarie Fields remain problematic. The following chapter, Chapter 6, discusses this study’s findings concerning the relationship between Macquarie Fields police and their local community.
CHAPTER 6

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MACQUARIE FIELDS POLICE AND THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITY

Introduction

This chapter and the following chapter, Chapter Seven, address the findings obtained from the research process. This chapter, through the accounts of community service providers and the accounts and observations of police participants, provides a descriptive overview of the police-community relationship at Macquarie Fields. It will show that, despite a firm commitment from the New South Wales Police Force to be more accountable and better serve communities and the attempts of the Macquarie Fields Command to facilitate such initiatives there is an apparent failure to properly implement community-policing and accountability to the local community. Also discussed is the finding that a poor relationship exists between the Macquarie Fields community and local police, despite the aforementioned attempts of senior police management. Chapter Seven addresses the findings concerning underlying factors that have contributed to the poor police-community relationship at Macquarie Fields.

A number of data sources are drawn upon, namely, interviews conducted with general duties (street) police participants; observations conducted of their interactions with members of the Macquarie Fields community during the course of their duties and interviews conducted with senior police management and community service providers who assist Macquarie Fields residents. In addition, data from annotations constructed in NVivo (2008) during data analysis are also drawn upon.
A number of themes pertaining to the relationship between the Macquarie Fields Police and their local community have been identified in this thesis. They are:

- managers’ approach to community policing
- relations between Macquarie Fields Police and their local community
- notions held by street police as to what constitutes effective police accountability
- understandings of street police as to what makes up a police-community partnership
- crime reduction strategies and inexperienced police.

Diagram 1 summarises the findings regarding the aforementioned themes which provide a description of the relationship between Macquarie Fields Police and their local community. The discussion of findings which follows uses sub headings related to the research question. Direct quotations are indicated by indenting and italicizing the text. Participants’ pseudonyms are included in the text or at the end of each participant’s quotations and observation notes are identified as observation notes.
Diagram 1: The Relationship between Macquarie Fields Police and their Local Community

- Police notions of accountability.
- Police understandings of community partnership.
- Police-community relations.
- The problematic relationship between Macquarie Fields police and the local community.
- Police managers’ intentions.
- Crime reduction strategies.
- Young inexperienced police.
Profile of respondents

As outlined in the method chapter a total of 30 police attached to the Macquarie Fields Patrol were interviewed for this study. The ranks of participants consisted of 3 Inspectors, 3 Sergeants, 6 Senior Constables, 16 Constables and 2 Probationary Constables. The 3 Inspectors were police managers, all male, between the ages of 40-49 years. The other 27 police participants were general duties officers whose role was to predominantly patrol the streets of Macquarie Fields and respond to complaints/requests for assistance from members of the community. Of these participants, 17 were male, their ages consisted of 10 less than 29 years of age, 3 between 30-39 years, another 3, 40-49 years and just one was over 50. Six had more than 5 years policing experience although only 2 had more than 5 years experience at Macquarie Fields. The greater proportion were junior police, with little experience at Macquarie Fields. Of the 10 female street police, 5 were under 29 years of age and 5 were between 30-39 years. Four had more than 5 years policing experience with 3 possessing more than 5 years experience at Macquarie Fields. Six were junior police with little experience at Macquarie Fields.

A total of 18 community service respondents servicing the Macquarie Fields area were also interviewed for his study. Thirteen respondents were female and 5 were male. Of the female respondents, 6 worked for a Government organisation and 7 employed by non-government organisations. Ten had less than five years experience at Macquarie Fields, with each of the remaining 3 females having service between 6-10, 11-15 and 16-20 years. Of the 5 male respondents, 3 worked for a Government organisation and 2 employed by non-government organisations. Four had less than five years experience at Macquarie Fields, with the remaining male having service between 11-15 years.
Furthermore, 20 of the 30 police participants were not performing duties at Macquarie Fields at the time of the 2005 riots.

The research fieldwork for this study was conducted during two periods of time, each lasting for approximately three months. Twenty two semi-structured interviews were conducted with Community Service Providers during the period September to November 2007. A further thirty semi-structured interviews and field observations were conducted with police participants during the September to November 2008 period. The semi-structured interviews for police and community service provider participants consisted of questions which were scaffolded upon the theoretical "conceptions of the research topic" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p.131). The following table provides a summary of the respondent profiles:
Table 4: Profile of police participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents:</th>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Gender:</th>
<th>Years of Police service:</th>
<th>Police Service at Macquarie Fields:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 - 29</td>
<td>30 - 39</td>
<td>40 - 49</td>
<td>50 +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Police Managers:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Street Police:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reg</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ralph</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>16-20 yrs</td>
<td>6-10 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>6-10 yrs</td>
<td>3-5 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigel</td>
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<td>0-2 yrs</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abby</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>3-5 yrs</td>
<td>3-5 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6-10 yrs</td>
<td>3-5 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonnie</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6-10 yrs</td>
<td>3-5 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bev</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6-10 yrs</td>
<td>6-10 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lydia</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandy</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oscar</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>3-5 yrs</td>
<td>3-5 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bree</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6-10 yrs</td>
<td>6-10 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>6-10 yrs</td>
<td>3-5 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kylie</td>
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<td>0-2 yrs</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haley</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6-10 yrs</td>
<td>6-10 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ian</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitch</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>6-10 yrs</td>
<td>6-10 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>6-10 yrs</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naomi</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>26-30 yrs</td>
<td>3-5 yrs</td>
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Table 5: Profile of community service provider participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Government Organisation</th>
<th>Non-Government Organisation</th>
<th>Length of Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narelle</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>6-10 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debbie</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tim</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>3-5 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>3-5 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronda</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>3-5 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daphne</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>16-20 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>3-5 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>3-5 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwyneth</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gina</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>3-5 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sue</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neridah</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>11-15 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billy</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>11-15 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tina</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>0-2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonia</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>3-5 yrs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Macquarie Fields police management**

This section describes this study’s findings concerning the intentions of police management at Macquarie Fields to forge closer partnerships, be more accountable to the local community and improve relations. These objectives are predominantly facilitated through community partnerships forged with residents and government/non-government providers servicing the Macquarie Fields area, increased feedback to victims of crime and strategies to improve relations between police and local youth.
All three police managers interviewed for this study expressed enthusiasm and commitment for the police-community initiatives occurring in the local community. Bob provided an overview of recent police initiatives which involved police working closely with other government and non-government service agencies within the community:

There are a number of initiatives that have been brought in...pretty much the main ones that have been brought in...are involvement in the rejuvenation committees that have been undertaken by the Department of Housing. It involves all government departments, the Department of Education, Juvenile Justice, Police, Health, Schools. Because they are relocating a number of Department of Housing residents, both in Minto and the Macquarie Fields area and Claymore, it’s an all agencies committee that actually goes as well as community representatives, also representatives from various government and non-government agencies, such as the female women’s refuges. They meet basically once a month, where they outline the strategies for improvements for the community not only just the buildings, parks and that kind of stuff, but also how they interact, and the services the agencies can provide to the clients. So we get a multi-agency approach.

Billy, a community service provider, spoke positively of police participation in these meetings:

At that level it is very positive, they listen, they take notes they also keep people up to date of what their trying to do in the area and also residents have the opportunity to ask questions you know “what are you doing about this and
that” or “I heard there’s been a problem or these kids have been in the house next door” and they take notes on this.

In addition, police officer Bonnie expressed the view that local residents participating in these community meetings appreciated the attendance of police:

The community is responsive and they do like the fact that we participate in a lot of their community meetings. A lot of the meetings I go to they’re not anything that we run so we don’t have any hands in the organisation but they invite us to participate in them and they’re happy for us to do it so as they can get first hand input from us and they can give it to us as well if they have issues or problems they can then tell us about it rather than going through a third person so they do like the fact that we are turning up.

However, police management did acknowledge the difficulties experienced at times in allocating available staff to attend these community meetings:

If I can’t attend a meeting, I’d try to ensure that someone else can go. The difficulty with this system is that I do a report monthly. It’s reliant not only upon myself but the other duty officers. If I’m not here tomorrow for argument’s sake, it’s reliant on that duty officer, if they can’t go, to get somebody else to go. (Bob)

As well as attempting to forge closer links with other agencies through community meetings, police management also highlighted the introduction of a customer service approach by police at Macquarie Fields as another initiative for greater police accountability to the local community:

As far as initiatives from the police itself there has been a review of all incidents involving violence. This is what we are starting on initially to see what victim follow-up has been done because what we have found is obviously
when you come into a new Command you have new ideas and what we found
when we first came here was a lot of good work was actually being done but the
victims didn’t know about it. A point in question was the detectives here did an
excellent job in relation to clearing up a number of robberies, nineteen
robberies in a month. We set up a mini task force at the Command and
identified a number of offenders and locked them up for numerous robberies.
When we went back and looked through the events and cases the victims had
never been notified the good work had been done, the reality of it was the
victims didn’t know about it. So I suppose from my point of view and that of Mr.
Jones, ultimately the difficulty as far as customer service is the victim sees the
police at the point where the initial report is made and after that they don’t
generally hear from the police unless they need them to go to court. So
ultimately where you get a situation where they locked up nineteen people for
argument’s sake and the majority of those people pleaded guilty before the
court there was no necessity for the victims to go to court. The victims would
never know that there has been a successful conclusion that the offender had
been arrested and the outcome of court. The Commander is very big on
customer service and so what we did we got two part time officers we are
giving them additional twelve hour shifts and what their job is purely they go
through a range of events which we started on involving physical violence.
What they do they go through to see if there has been an action in relation to
your seven day victim follow-up which is the standard charter of victims rights
and the police don’t seem to follow it too closely. Where that hasn’t been done
we made an initial contact just to find out if there was any additional
information and that sort of thing. We then had information that someone had
been arrested we then got back to the victim. The point being is that it is positive for us and the victims because as you know most people know people. They go to barbecues and they talk, “Yes I got robbed I never heard anything what do they do? I don’t know what they do”. (Bob)

The new boss has got a very strong customer service focus about following up and I think corporately we do that very badly and I think we’re trying to work on that which is a good thing. It’s about following up and making sure that we do things. (Steve)

However, police management did recognise challenges associated with encouraging Macquarie Fields street police to adopt a customer service approach:

So what we’re trying to do is to change the police’s attitudes towards the victims in the sense that eventually and its not going to happen overnight but eventually what we are working is to get the police used to the concept that there is an obligation to get back to the victim regardless of whether there is an arrest or not. (Bob)

Ultimately in the medium to the long-term our idea is to get the police to actually deal with the community in a better light. I think what we are asking the police is not too high an expectation of what we want them to do. But there is reluctance, there is a clear reluctance by police for whatever reason whether or not its work related. (Bob)

In addition to these aforementioned initiatives, following the 2005 riots, police management at Macquarie fields introduced strategies to improve the strained relations
between police and local youth. Police officer Kylie provided examples of such enterprises:

_We recently had a debutante ball. A lot of the male police were escorts for the Aboriginal girls. Also, in conjunction with ‘Youth off the Streets’ and Father O’Riely we do a lot of work. I was just asked recently if I would do something with him but it didn’t coincide with my shift so I couldn’t help him out._

Additionally, police managers spoke enthusiastically about camps such as ‘Camp Impact’ organised by the management team in which various police and youth attended. This provided an ideal opportunity for both parties to interact:

_The first thing is Camp Impact it’s a very good initiative which looked at targeting people. We started with ones that were involved in the riots and can I say this to that, the flip side is sending some of these young cops who might have a somewhat more aggressive approach to situations and young people and would rather take the person on as opposed to talking to them so they are picked to go along as well so they know that these are actually human beings and young blokes and all that sort of stuff. So it’s an approach not just for the community member but it’s also for the targeted police officer as well. So you get both sides of the story. So next time when they see each other on the street it will be, “Hey Billy I want to talk to you”, instead of “Come here you”, because they need to take that approach sometimes, it might just help to resolve something._ (Steve)

Another more recent policing initiative involves police, in consultation with the local schools, rewarding indigenous students who have behaved responsibly. These students are sent on a camp with selected police from the patrol. As well as rewarding these
youths it provides them with an opportunity to interact with police. Don talked about how this came about:

*I put it to my Local Area Commander and Assistant Commissioner, let’s do something, I don’t want to reward naughty kids there are plenty of programs out there supporting them let’s look at a program where we can look at Aboriginal kids who aren’t misbehaving, who are going to school. They don’t have to be an Einstein, they just have to be going to school involving them selves in the school community and never having had a suspension or detention. This was two years ago. Originally what we were going to do we were going to give a reward at the assembly. There are a lot of fantastic Aboriginal kids out there, who in spite of the circumstances, are achieving at school. They’re playing sport, were not involved in any crime and these are not necessarily kids of affluent parents. They’re kids of one single parent, some of whose parents, have been in jail.*

Police manager Steve, further elaborated on the rationale behind the organisation of this police/youth initiative:

*Another initiative is that there has been another good initiative brought in by Don that’s where they have identified good kids as opposed to troublesome kids. It’s rewarding the good ones so we’re not always focusing all of our attention on the bad kids. We also need to focus on the good kids because they are the ones that act as role models at the school. It still might be ones that are from difficult families identified as being having a hard time but they’re not necessarily the ones that are throwing bricks and rocks at cops, a good kid might be one who is still doing a bit of trouble around the place. What they did*
was that Don got on board with the navy and they took them out on a ship for a couple of nights. They also rolled in a couple of good constables as a reward to go out with them.

In fact, this policing initiative with the support of the Australian Navy became a huge success for the children selected to participate in the venture:

We ended up taking fifteen kids on a three day trip out to sea. We left here and went to Albatross the first night the land base. We had a full tour of Albatross and the helicopters. They got onto the simulators which actually train the navy helicopter pilots and they were allowed to play on them and they are $5 million each. (Don)

Police participant Arthur, a general duties constable, recently attended such a camp. He commented upon the benefits of these camps for police-youth relations:

It’s made working with them a lot of easier. A lot of them talk to me on the street now, it’s so much easier now I can deal with these kids, they remember me, they know my name and I know them. I have actually been to a situation where one of them was arcing up against other police, I’ve shown up and they have sort of mellowed out and say, “How are you going”? I’ve put them in custody and put them in the back of the truck, so it does help. There is another camp coming up, I think it’s the best thing. Just even to get our younger police to go, create this bond with the kids its unreal and the kids talk, they talk to their friends and they know who’s who. I’ve been in a place where I’ve been talking to a kid who’s been on one of the camps and another kid comes up and
starts being a bit of a smart arse and the other kid says, “No, no, this copper’s cool”.

Things like that I think are awesome, you got to build these bridges with the community out there. They are the things that definitely help, that help the community and the police. Now I look at it and, if I was ever asked to go back and to go to the camp again, I wouldn’t hesitate, because the benefits I get in dealing with them on the street are great.

Community service respondents such as Neridah and Lee recognised the aforementioned efforts of police management at Macquarie Fields:

...under Albert, things have greatly improved, dialogue has improved, community relationships have improved. (Neridah)

The police seem to have become more a part of the community, so there are more partnerships going on with services in the area. They are now working on a different level, not working on ‘we are the power’; it’s become a lot more even. (Lee)

Although police management at Macquarie Fields have attempted a number of strategies to bring police and the local community closer police manager Bob highlighted there were still obstacles in the form of police attitudes:

...let’s be honest some people say look this is all bullshit. What are we doing this for?. This is not what we are here for. (Bob)
This section described the positive community engagement strategies implemented by senior police management at Macquarie Fields to forge closer partnerships, be more accountable and improve relations with the local community. The major initiatives in police-community relations at Macquarie Fields described by key participants included a multi-agency committee addressing the rejuvenation of Housing Commission areas; follow-up work with victims of crime as a community relationships exercise and to ensure that responsibilities under the charter are met, Camp Impact, which brought local police and troubled youth together and a program rewarding Indigenous children for good behaviour, supported by the Australian Navy.

The following section reports this study’s finding that, despite these efforts, to bring the Macquarie Fields police closer to the local community, problematic relations still exists between the local community and the general duties police with whom residents have daily contact.
Relations between Macquarie Fields police and their local community

Despite the good intentions of police management at Macquarie Fields to forge closer partnerships and to be more accountable to the local community, there seem to be problems translating these intentions to the daily policing practices of street police serving the local community.

Eighty three percent of the 18 community service providers who participated in this study spoke of the problematic relations between general duties (street) police and community members. Tim, a community service participant, employed as a counsellor predominantly working with youth in the Macquarie Fields area, described the state of police-community relations:

I think typically in this community people don’t have a lot of regard for the police. They don’t have a lot of respect for what they do, they have pretty negative attitudes towards them and I think this attitude is somewhat reciprocated by the police. It is sort of we hate you and you hate us.

Neridah and Billy also echoed these views:

There is also a lot of frustration still with the community; unfortunately as a result of the riots a lot of the younger generation have a real hatred for the police. (Neridah)

The perception is there I mean it’s hard to know what the ideal solution is. There are times as to how it comes across to residents that the police are being unethically heavy. There is a culture, that it is them and us. I think this whole culture in a community like this is fairly well entrenched. If you really look at it,
it goes back centuries really and so this whole underclass working class, criminal class, poor areas, so it has a long history and that's what gets passed on through generations. (Billy)

Community service respondent, Wendy, recalled a conversation she had with a young child, which tends to highlight the negative community attitude towards police being passed on through generations:

_I’ll never forget. I was at a drop in here, and there was this six year old pushing a pram with a doll, and I said, “Oh you have a cute baby”, and she said, “Its dead” and I said, “What?” She said, “Yes, It’s dead. The cops killed it”._

Narelle, who resides within the community and works for various local voluntary support agencies, provided an account of her observations of the physical response of some residents to the sight of police patrolling the local streets:

_So, when you walk down the street here at Macquarie Fields and you see a police officer, you instantly see shoulders rise from the people to say, “I’m here, I’m holding my ground. Don’t you think you can come and intimidate me.” It’s a defence mechanism, a protection mechanism, which, over the years, the people here have lost all that trust in the police, because there has not been a consistency in the way they attend us, because, in some places, they will attend on things real fast, maybe an Apprehended Violence Order, then at other times it’s not so quick, and they are not as trusting._

Eighty six percent of the 30 police participants interviewed revealed their awareness of the negative police sentiment existing amongst some of the local residents:
It’s a shame that they can’t have more of an opinion of us. They can’t give us a bit more, to go and work with us a bit more. Sometimes it’s a bit of a sheep mentality, they just follow each other and negativity spreads. (Bev)

They have got that stigma that they don’t want to be dogs, and if you have anything to do with us, you will be labelled a dog. (Les)

We are out there trying to do the best we can. I think in these Department of Housing areas they all seem to get a negative sort of grouping; they just seem to all have the same attitude towards police which is generally negative. (Eugene)

Similarly, Tim a community service provider respondent described an incident he witnessed where police sought the assistance from community members following a serious crime. The police requests, however, were met with a negative response from local residents:

Another incident I can think of, there was a case of an individual with a gun and this one I didn’t witness first hand, but police were canvassing the area looking for this person, there were a number of officers up at the shops asking questions of the residents. What really surprised me was that the officers went about it reasonably, but the residents who were being asked their responses were completely negative, “Na, mate, you can’t ask me nothing”, and swearing at police. This happened a year ago, and it was a real eye opener in terms of the people on that particular day, and that they had no respect what so ever for the police, no respect for what the police were doing, and no respect as to how
the police were going about it. The police were doing nothing wrong, but they were copping abuse.

Police participant William provided a response concerning police-community relations which was typical of most police respondents:

*It’s definitely us against them. They swear at us and talk to us poorly, but when they don’t, I sometimes wonder, why are they being polite? It gets my suspicions up. I’m not talking about all of them.*

Eighty three percent of community service respondents spoke of what they considered were harsh practices being conducted by Macquarie Fields police towards community members with whom they come in contact. Although the respondents acknowledged the good intentions of police management, they also expressed the view that these intentions failed to translate to the day to day interactions of street police with the local community. Billy summed up the typical view of these respondents:

*There is a real paradox here, even with what I was saying about Albert. The official line is we want to engage with the community, work with them and get to know them and develop positive community relations, but, underneath that, there might be police officers that during their training, they might get told that, that this is the official line, but then this is this undercurrent, ‘We’re police. These people are ratbags, and we’re here to keep them in line, and don’t take any crap from them and, if you need to, it’s o.k. to get a bit heavy, because you have to keep these ratbags in line’, and that’s still there. Occasionally, this pops up in the media, and, every time this happens, there is immediate denial from the Police Association that, “No, no, we don’t do that”.*
In fact, many community service provider participants provided examples of police patrol practices which they felt impacted adversely upon police-community relations:

*It’s intimidating, it’s like we have police officers breathing down our necks, you can’t turn around without police officers there. To the point we have lived here for eighteen years, and my back door has never been locked and many families live like that, but we have so many police walking around, but we never had anything like that, since the riots, the police on bicycles and foot patrols have come in. (Narelle).*

*The police patrol around here all the time, it’s like their waiting for something and they pick you up on the silliest thing. They’re looking for people to be doing something. You don’t see the police just informally walking along having a friendly chat to the residents. You only see the cops talking to people when they’re telling them to move on or when they’re arresting them or accusing them there is never any community building, or when there is a special event a high public profile type of thing the cops are playing high profile. (Wendy)*

In addition, Andy, a teacher working for a voluntary organisation assisting local youths, referred to police practices of stopping and speaking to local residents for no apparent reason as damaging to residents’ attitudes towards police:

*People don’t like being pulled up in the street when they’re not doing anything wrong and I suppose, around these types of areas, if you’re walking along the street, unfortunately you get stereotyped if your wearing a certain type of clothes, if you’re in a group of people, whereas you and I could walk along the*
street and we wouldn’t get pulled up. Other people get pulled up because of the way they are going about their normal day. I mean, some of the times, police have every right to pull them up. I suppose that is the thing I hear, “They’re just picking on us because of this and that”. I suppose there is this mentality, “They’re picking on us, etc.”, and that also comes from adults. It goes across the age difference.

Other community service providers who participated in this study provided examples of specific incidents in which they witnessed poor police interactions with community members:

*About a month ago, two boys from school were just walking down the road here and being silly, but nothing out of the ordinary, one was standing on one side of the road and the other on the other side and they were chipping the football over the road. I’m just standing here, walking back to my office, so it’s about twenty past eight, and kids were on their way to school, and, sure enough, a police car wheels around the corner and saw the boys kicking the football. The car sorts of speeds up and jumps up onto the gutter, so, from the other side of the road, it comes up on to the gutter directly in front of the school, and then the police proceed to call the boys over and they go through their bags. The police asked the boys for their names and for ID. I mean, twelve year old boys, asking them for ID, “What are you doing? Blah, blah, blah”, just basically giving them a real hard run down. These boys were in school uniform and it was outside of the school. Those sort of things are unfair, and they were young police I hadn’t seen before, new to the area, and stuff like that really unsettles, because those kids go straight into the playground. All the other kids who were*
coming into school saw the situation, so they have gone off sort of heroes, because they have been stopped by the police, they have gone home and told their parents, and they become upset and angry over what had occurred, so there is a real spill on effect over something ridiculous done by the police. If the police were so concerned, they should have taken them into the school, it was a school matter which occurred just outside of the school. By all means, the police should have stopped their car and just sung out to the boys and asked them to stop. It’s things like that that develop a negative rapport with kids that age, because you have that twelve to thirteen age bracket, and they can go either way with their responses and their interactions with the police. So, if that’s the most significant interaction with the police officer, that negative one is going to continue on when they turn sixteen and they are out on the street, that sort of stuff stays with them and the context of that interaction keeps playing. I had a conversation with one of the parents and they were wondering what the bloody hell was going on. (Andrew)

Interestingly enough I had an encounter there myself one night, where the police didn’t know I was over there. I was sitting on a front patio kind of thing, but we were sitting in a front yard. They were drinking their tinnies, but they were not doing anything wrong, and we had a barbeque in one of the resident’s yards and we were just talking and laughing and that’s about it. I had my tin of Pepsi and they had whatever they had, but there was no trouble being caused, but the cops pulled up and turned on the music, “What you’re going to do when we come for you” the song was, ‘Bad Boys’, so the cops had this music playing really loud and then they turned it down and said, “Get back inside you filthy
“pigs, what are you doing out here?” it was extremely, extremely out of line and extremely derogatory, and they had no idea I was sitting there, it was after dark, it was about eight thirty at night, they had no idea I was there. This happened towards the end of 2005, this was after the riots. (Wendy).

Many community service providers expressed the view that younger, inexperienced police tended to treat community members poorly during their interactions. For instance, Neridah, a local who has spent some thirteen years working as a volunteer for various local support agencies, whilst acknowledging the work of police management at Macquarie Fields, also commented upon the negative impact of younger inexperienced police:

They have actually almost undone all that healing and process and I haven’t formally addressed that yet, but they have really come in with a power. These are the new police that have come in on probation. It is just the law there, there is no social justice.

Wendy considered that the existence of poor relations between community members and the younger police emanate from a ‘power’ attitude held by some younger police:

It’s the young police who think they are one step up from everyone else, and, I mean, I have come across a few constables who actually give a dam, but they’re few and far between. It’s more in the higher ranks that they actually care. It’s the young constables that just want to get out and rev in their big cars, and throw around their power, and it’s destructive.
Andrew, another community service participant, supported these aforementioned comments of Wendy. He reported:

*I think the way police treat the residents comes down to basic feelings of class separation, issues of superiority and inferiority. How do you take that out? I don’t know. Macquarie Fields is a classic example in that you can really break a community by how it’s policed.*

Tim provided a response typical of most community service respondents. Although acknowledging the vital role police play in the community, he also summed up the problematic relations between police and local community members:

*I think that the community wishes there was greater police presence here, the good element of this community, the people that participate with community groups that interact through the centre on an official basis, people like those from the Department of Housing, they like the police, they wish they were here more, they wish there was more of a presence to stop the criminal element in this neighbourhood from doing what they do. But I think what happens is the community gets generalised and the good people of this community sort of suffers, because they get kind of pigeon-holed with the bad element, and the good people end up getting treated badly by the police.*

In contrast though, Gina a solicitor assisting members of the local community considered that police at Macquarie Fields were interacting effectively with the local community:

*I mean we use to have really an anti police presence and they are not so in your face anymore. Yes and they’re certainly working hard to create a positive*
interface between residents and service providers and this has been my experience.

All three groups of respondents were divided on the issue as to whether there had been an improvement in police-community relations at Macquarie Fields since the 2005 riots. Police managers for example, believed there had been an improvement in relations:

*Before the riots, there had been and there still is that adversarial approach towards the cops in some ways and also the nature of the jobs we do. I’ve relieved at ... and worked at...and all those places, and they don’t have that adversarial approach all the time, it’s the exception not the rule, whereas here, it’s more the rule than the exception that it’s adversarial. That is slowly changing in this area, I think because of the cops have been involved with the young blokes and know them, and if we knock out two or three of those things, it’s gotta be a positive. I think, too, before the riots, crime was much higher, so there was this nonstop circle of crime, go in and do the job and get out quickly, don’t worry about anyone else, don’t worry about the victim, because another ten jobs were waiting. Now there is a little bit more, because we’re actually doing pretty well with our crime, and I think there is more of a focus on it now. I think also the very good work of the relationship at the time of the riots between the cops here, not really your all government approach, but your other outside areas such as Youth Off the Streets has helped a lot. (Steve)*

Police officer, Ben, though, whilst believing there has been an improvement in police community relations attributed such to the implementation of harder policing practices:
It seems to have improved since the riots. The respect prior to the riots was horrible. For the last two years, you notice that respect has improved on the streets. I think they know now we won’t tolerate their crap and that was one thing out of the riots.

Whereas another policing participant considered that there has not been too great a difference in police-community relations since the 2005 riots:

Do you know, I think it was always there and what happened just gave them an excuse. Things have improved with a handful, but not with the others. When they are in the wrong, then they know they are in the wrong, though they still want to make excuses. Some people say to you, “The last cop I dealt with did this and this” and I always say to them, “Well I am not that person, and you have to give everyone a fair go, and I have treated you well”. (Bev)

Community Service provider participants were divided as to whether there had been an improvement in police-community relations since the 2005 riots. Lee, for example, a community service provider for four years, felt there had been a significant improvement in police-community relations:

Yes, there has been a massive difference. Before the riots, we had an open day at our Service and we asked the police to be a part of that, and we specifically said to them, “Please don’t turn up in uniform”, because of the clients we have, and, before you know it, four patrol cars pulled up out in front, and these coppers in uniform got out and the clients just scattered. But that whole way of working with the community has changed since the riots. The police seem to have become more a part of the community, so there are more partnerships
going on with services in the area. They are now working on a different level, not working on ‘we are the power’; it’s become a lot more even.

However, Rhonda, working as a community service provider for five years, when asked whether there had been an improvement responded:

*No they’re gotten worse.*

Poor relations from the accounts of community respondents and police alike appear to exist between Macquarie Fields Police and the local community. The accounts from community service respondents who witnessed poor police interactions with community members indicate that the daily practices of police on the street impact adversely upon police-community relations. Furthermore, this study found that although police managers considered there had been an improvement in police-community relations since the 2005 riots, opinions were divided amongst police and community service respondents as to whether this was actually the case. The following section describes the perceptions of accountability held by the police respondents.

**Notions held by street police as to what constitutes effective police accountability**

In addition to this study’s finding that continuing poor relations and negative interactions exist at Macquarie Fields between street police and the community members with whom they come in contact, this study also discovered 66% of the 27 operational street police interviewees did not consider themselves accountable to the Macquarie Fields community, rather to broader community or narrower organisation players:
No. Like, when I say community, I don’t mean that I’m accountable to their community; I say that I’m accountable to the New South Wales community. I go out and do my bit for the people of New South Wales, that’s who I feel accountable to. I wouldn’t say at the end of the day that I’m accountable to the Macquarie Fields community. (Naomi)

Well I do the right thing I don’t have to worry about being accountable to the community. So I’ll make sure that everything is done for the Boss, because I don’t have to worry about how I am on the street so I don’t feel accountable to the community. (William)

Obviously the police, if I do something wrong I feel I oh my gosh I’ve ruined the reputation of the whole police in general and then you have got the Boss in charge of Macquarie Fields and even my buddy I would feel I’ve let her down.

(Mandy)

Similarly, when asked whether she felt accountable to the community, Jenny responded:

Not really to be quite honest. I feel my accountability is to the organisation.

On the other hand, there were a few police participants, such as Nigel, Martin and Lydia who considered that police are accountable to the local community:

Directly I feel that I am accountable to supervisors and duty officers and I’m obviously accountable to the Commander. On a more general perspective, at the end of the day, we are accountable to the community, to make sure that we’re just doing our job professionally and in an ethical way, sort of thing, and that’s the bottom line, I think. (Nigel)
Again it’s one of those things that when you are filling out that initial application you know you are running into a community based job. That by in large my actions as a police officer are going to have some impression on a victim or a person’s life so I guess in that state I am accountable because if I’m not doing my job then I’m not serving them and that all the leads down the road to complaints and that’s something I don’t want. (Martin)

You feel accountable definitely to your superior officers but you also feel accountable to the community. Even though as I said earlier I don’t feel necessarily part of the community as part of New South Wales police you are accountable to everyone. (Lydia)

In contrast, though, Wendy, a community service provider at Macquarie Fields for three years, felt that the police organisation itself is not accountable to the community:

*I don’t think the police organisation from what I have seen at community meetings is accountable to the community.*

In terms of whether police accountability has improved since the 2005 riots, Neridah, a community service provider for thirteen years, provided a response typical of many respondents:

*Absolutely not. I can honestly say, even with my ability to be open, you know, having a good grasp, I would say, ‘Absolutely not’, both professionally and personally.*
Steve, a police manager, whilst expressing the view that there had been an improvement in police accountability at the organizational level following the 2005 riots, also acknowledged the challenges in having street police adopt such attitudes:

In regards to constables, certainly not as much, but these days definitely more, without a doubt. But are we still getting that across as much as we like? ‘No’ is the answer to that. It is a struggle to make them a bit accountable to the community, which is really customer service I suppose and in our approach to the work and the people.

The comments of the police participants, Jenny and Bree, concerning their beliefs that there had not been an improvement in police accountability to the community following the 2005 riots, add support to the accountability challenges highlighted by Steve:

Not hugely. I think it’s a little bit less relaxed I guess. I think they are trying to make us more and more accountable. (Jenny)

I have always been accountable for my own actions. I think it has always been drummed into us that we must be accountable for our actions. I don’t think any incident will change that in the organization. I don’t think there has been any change in police accountability before or after the riots. (Bree)

Many police participants considered themselves accountable to their supervisors and the New South Wales Police Force, but not the local Macquarie Fields community. In addition, whilst police management considered there had been something of an improvement in police accountability since 2005, there was also an acknowledgement that this remains a problematic issue. Furthermore, views expressed by many
community service provider participants suggested there had not been an improvement in police accountability to the local community following the 2005 riots. The following section examines police participants’ understandings of partnership. Similar to the theme of ‘accountability’, it is contended that respondents’ problematic understandings of what constitutes a successful police-community partnership could be a significant contributing factor to the poor relations experienced between the Macquarie Fields community and their local police.

**Understandings of street police as to what makes up a police-community partnership**

Similar to findings contained within the theme of ‘accountability’, there is a gap between police management’s intentions and street police understandings and practice. For instance, some community service provider respondents, such as Billy, support the notion that senior police management at Macquarie Fields appear to have good intentions to forge partnerships with the community:

> More recently, Albert, so, when he came in, he has come in with a different attitude that he really wants to engage with the community. He has actually set up a few community meetings to meet with people and hear their concerns, and people are really happy about that, and he has expressed a genuine concern and desire to help us create a better community. People feel that he is genuine about that.

Although Bonnie, a police participant, considered that these meetings failed to be representative of all sections of the community:
Not just youths, but younger adults, don’t attend these meetings. There is not a lot of participation by them. It’s more the middle aged and older people, I think. They had their community one way, and they have seen a change over the years, and they just want back what they had. Probably forty to fifty and older.

In addition, there was a criticism from community service provider participant Andrew, that police fail to take into account and act upon community feedback provided during these meetings:

*But, as far as listening, taking on board feedback, I think the police, as an institution, aren’t designed to respond that way. I think they have their protocols and procedures and, by and large, they just continue doing what they need to do, because the directives are coming from elsewhere.*

However, interviews conducted with police respondents revealed that their understandings of what constituted a police-community partnership were focused on a one way flow of information emanating from community members to the police, especially concerning local criminal activity. Police respondents, Martin, Kylie and Nigel for instance, articulated the belief that police-community partnerships were measured in terms of the amount of criminal intelligence being supplied to police by community members. Based on these criteria, they considered that a partnership between police and community did exist:

*Yes, for sure. Even if it is only a phone call concerning a strange fellow walking around the streets, in some small way, it is assistance. I mean, they are always happy to help if they can. Again, though, you always get the ones that want to shut up shop and don’t say a thing. The majority, yes, they are always willing to lend their assistance if they can.* (Martin)
Some are. Some are happy to give us the information that we need. Some though tell us directly to our face to rack off. You get some on our side. (Kylie)

In relation to their role in the community in watching out for their neighbour. For example, if they see a neighbour’s house being broken into they get onto the phone. They work together and just sort of assist us in what we’re trying to do. (Nigel)

Lydia and Bonnie thought that a partnership with the community did not exist, as information concerning criminal activity was not forthcoming from community members:

Like, not to stereotype, but, in regards to the Department of Housing, even if they are a witness to a crime, a lot of them are hesitant and won’t help you, because they are kind of looking after their own, in a way. They don’t want to necessarily become involved. Also they are worried about the repercussions if they go to the police and they are a witness for a neighbour. They have to live with those neighbours. (Lydia)

We don’t get a lot of community participation in a lot of the things that we do. For example, we go to their meetings and they will bring to the table a problem which they themselves are experiencing. As for reporting crime the response is pretty poor. (Bonnie)
This belief about what constitutes a successful police-community partnership appears to manifest itself in the interactions of police with residents at community meetings. The reluctance of street police to interact with residents at these meetings became evident through the comments expressed by some of the community service provider respondents:

*Also, for example, I went to a community lunch, and there was a policeman that came and spoke, but he didn’t actually grab a bite. I grabbed a plate and ate with the residents, because that’s what I want to do. I want to integrate and get to know them. And I was looking at this policeman and I thought to myself, if you just grabbed a plate and sat down, and started to have a chat with people, it would be fantastic, but, instead, you just wanted to say something and leave. A resident actually asked me if I was a copper. But, it would have been good if that officer had spent time, but, I mean, they probably are, I don’t go to every community event that goes on. I certainly see room for improvement, though, in terms of their involvement in community events, rather than just coming across as the police they need to become a little more approachable in their image.*

(Sam)

Similar comments were echoed by Fiona, working for a local information and referral centre:

*We have a community lunch here once a month and the police, after the riots, came to them nearly all the time, but they all come in full uniform, you know, batons, bomber jackets. They all stand out the front out there, and I tell the police that they are making the community members all nervous. It was intimidating, and I told them, “Hey guys, do you want to come in, as you are*
scaring off the community”. Their idea is, Why do police scare them? They
don’t get it. I said to the police, “I want you to get in and do some washing up
and do some serving, get rid of your guns and all of that. “ They can’t do that,
that’s classed as a uniform. Now, the only one has ever come in and been a real
hands-on for the community was one of the women constables. Again, I think
it’s that culture. They all stand around there, they all sit down together, and I
say “Guys, how about you break up, one of you sit over there, another over
here”. They don’t come back, then, because I’m too bossy and I brought this up
with the meeting I had last week and they say that they are too busy and I say
“Well this is your opportunity to be working and liaising with the community”.
I said “I didn’t complain about you attending the lunch, but I complained about
the way you conducted yourselves there”.

It would appear, then, that police do not consider residents as partners in addressing
community crime problems, but rather as sources of information concerning criminal
activity. Furthermore, this suggests that, despite the attempts of police management at
Macquarie Fields to forge partnerships with the local community, evidence exists that
the focus of street police concerning crime problems is one of a more reactive nature.
This would tend to indicate that police at Macquarie Fields are not focused on how
they might assist community members improve their living circumstances and prevent
crime, but rather are focused upon the prosecution and reduction of crime. This would
appear to be supported in part though the accounts of community service providers
who indicate a lack of interest amongst local street police to actively participate in
community consultative meetings.
The following section discusses the theme of 'tactics employed by police at Macquarie Fields to drive down the local crime rate' and the negative impact this has upon police-community relations. It is proposed that the aforementioned attitudes of police attached to Macquarie Fields concerning their lack of accountability and partnership with the local community is subsequently translated adversely to the way in which police conduct themselves during strategies employed in attempts to drive down the local crime rate. It is further suggested that these aggressive tactics contribute to the poor relations experienced between the Macquarie Fields police and the community members with whom they come in contact.

_Tactics employed by police to drive down the local crime rate_

This section presents this study’s finding concerning the theme ‘tactics employed by police to drive down the local crime rate’. This study found the existence of negative interactions between police and the Macquarie Fields community, in particular local youths arising from the way in which police conduct themselves whilst carrying out tactics to drive down the local crime rate. Senior police management at Macquarie Fields spoke enthusiastically of their efforts to reduce the local crime rate and make the area safer for local residents. For instance, senior police manager, Steve, provided an overview of strategies used to achieve their goal:

...our crime is different here. We have robberies like everywhere else, but, at Burwood, they have blokes running into pubs with shot guns, and here we have three Pacific islanders punching a kid in his nose for a bike and his shoes. It’s a very different type of situation. We very much focus on every day. We look at what’s occurring and is there a pattern of crime, and, if there is a pattern, we again take the ground, we go and punish that area. The use of the powers that
have been given to us, I have no doubt have made a difference, with the move-
ons and the search powers. They use these powers massively. Since 8:00am
yesterday morning to 8 o’clock today, they searched fifteen people. They moved
on six. We are predicting that, by the end of the month, we will have searched
260 people, and we’ll move on around 150, and that makes a huge difference.

However, it would appear that the manner in which these crime reduction tactics are
carried out by street police, whilst searching and moving on local residents, the
majority of whom are young people, has had an adverse impact upon police-
community relations. For instance, community service respondents, such as Sam and
Billy, cited incidents in which young local residents were being stopped and then
treated harshly by police:

Most of the clients that I work with, between the ages of fifteen to twenty four,
in their comments about the police, have spoken negatively about them, because
of their negative experiences. An example of that would be being accused, being
treated roughly, or police treating them aggressively, and as far as one saying
to me that a family member of his was a well known drug dealer in the area,
and being his son has ultimately tainted everyone by that, and just the other day
he got dragged out of the car in which he was travelling and was thrown onto
the bonnet and aggressively searched. (Sam)

Recently we did a community survey and I saw some young people out the front
of the shopping centre and this goes back to my point about perceptions. These
young people were about ten and some of them seem to be young people often
at a loose end. They were complaining that the police have been heavy with
them in questioning them, sort of almost threatening them and their feeling was that they were not doing anything wrong, just hanging around the area. The police were trying to move them on and intimidate them by the way they get questioned by the police or blamed for causing trouble and they claim their just innocently using the shopping centre facility like any resident has a right to.

(Billy)

In particular, community service providers cited incidents where police aggressively direct groups of youths to move on when they are observed by police to be interacting with their social group of friends in a public place, as being a significant contributing factor to the problematic relationship:

You have the good kids who aren’t doing anything, just standing around talking. The police come and break them up and yell at them, push them all out of the way and they aren’t doing anything. They don’t assist the community at all. This with the kids happens on my street corner, they sit out the front of my house along my brick wall. The kids won’t be doing anything. They’re just sitting there, talking with each other. They’re not misbehaving, anything like that, and there the ones that get kicked out and told to move on. I’d rather them be there than anywhere else, they’re keeping out of trouble. (Rhonda)

My other clients feel like they are being picked on by the police. Like if they’re gathering in their area in a public space they are always being told to move on and they say we’re not doing anything wrong. Just basic stuff like that usually nothing dramatic like cops beating on my door every night. The feeling with those youths being moved on is that the police are not treating them with
respect. They are being treated with disrespect in most cases. These young people are aged between eighteen and twenty four; they are young adults. They feel like they are being picked on in a discriminative way because of their age. They’re young, they’re hanging around, and the cops think they are going to do something. There may be five to six young people in the group doing nothing just mucking around. (Tina)

In addition, Narelle, a community service provider, commented that young people were constantly being approached by police:

Assumptions from the police that these kids associate with this and that, it’s just labelling and targeting. The kids have troubles with the approach of police, and just continually being approached by them, and being targeted. They just don’t know, it’s the culture of Macquarie Fields, and that has been as long as I have lived there.

Findings from interviews suggest that the practices of moving on and searching impacts negatively upon police-youth relations at Macquarie Fields. Furthermore, as suggested by Narelle, young people are continuously being approached by police. However, as the following responses illustrate, youth gathering in a public space is part of normal social interaction. Consequently, police attempting to disperse these groups causes tension between police and young people:

I think we really need to consider, ‘What is a gang?’ because these kids have instant communication. They don’t do anything without consulting their friends through MSN, my space page, mobile phone, so they do things in groups like we haven’t known for a very long time, and they don’t do anything without
consulting their group. So, what might be, in the past a reasonable offence in company, is no longer. I don’t believe, because I think the dynamics of young peoples’ communication has changed. Their entire socialisation is within a group and you can’t disperse the group, because, even when they are at home, they still interact as a group through MSN or My Space. So, they’re like a family, they’re more like a family than they have ever been before. Mostly, the kids are not doing anything wrong hanging out on the corner, because that is how they interact and all of their social life is based, not a group of three, or four, or five, it’s ten or fifteen these days, maybe twenty is a group, and each of those members of the group have their strengths and weaknesses, but they all contribute to the group as a large family would have done. I think, too, people having smaller and smaller families and this need for a tribe, or a pack, is still a need for human beings, and I think these kids do it so much to compensate for that. It can cause problems for police if it’s not seen for what it is. But if it’s a group that congregate at school as the same group, or you’re not threatened when fourteen rugby league players or eleven soccer players, that is not considered as a group out of control. So I think we need to consider the re-sizing of what we consider is a group of people socialising. What I’m getting at is that I don’t think, as adults, we don’t cope very well with highly sophisticated children and young people whose communication, they know how to communicate as a group. And often, in the group, you won’t find as much the leader anymore, but it’s different people taking on different responsibilities. Like, amongst those twenty on the street corner, there’s likely to be one with a various disability and that person is still part of their group, they look after them. How do you break up a family? Those kids under eighteen years old and
even those older would have greater intimacy with their twenty friends than their parents. (Debbie)

Years ago I remember you were told, if you were to go out anywhere, you were to go in numbers, because you were safe in numbers, you could protect each other. Now, if you get caught three or four, you’re obviously up to something, what are you doing? so this doesn’t now coincide with our family values and forms of protection. It doesn’t allow our kids to be safe, to be young children and run loose, and be able to play and adventure. (Narelle)

In addition to identifying the police practices of constantly moving on and searching youths as a contributing factor to poor police-community relations, community service provider participants such as Andrew identified that the majority of negative interactions between police and local youth involved younger police:

On the other hand, you have younger police that come in and don’t know the area and you find people commenting that those coppers are a bit hard. It’s the run of the mill constables, the younger ones, and, even in my own experiences in witnessing certain interactions, these police in their interactions tend to have negative social outcomes, especially with the young people, and I think it’s because they’re not from the area, so there is this attitude of trying to create this sense of forcible, you know, maintaining a sense of superiority.

These comments were also echoed by community service provider Neridah who observed:
At times in Macquarie Fields there were young police walking around talking to the young people. I don’t feel this happens as well as it use to. I think the older police were wiser in how they engaged. These young ones are more power punchy, have more ego and are no different to any young policeman. This comes through loud and clear through a lot of other different networks saying there is a difference amongst police in the management of young people.

Police management, in an attempt to reduce local crime, has directed street police to ‘move on’ and at times search young people socializing in groups in public spaces. Community members suggest that these practices are unnecessarily heavy for an age group for whom group membership matters, and which is supported by parents as a means of ensuring greater safety. These police practices were often conducted in an aggressive manner by younger inexperienced police which exacerbated the relationship problem between police and local community.
Summary

The findings of this study suggest that in terms of accountability, police on the whole, articulated the view that they considered themselves accountable to the New South Wales Police Force, their police managers and the New South Wales public, but not the Macquarie Fields community. It is contended that this lack of accountability held by many police participants towards the Macquarie Fields community impacted adversely upon the way in which police interacted and served the local residents, which in turn, negatively affected police-community relations.

Findings also suggested that effective police-community partnership at Macquarie Fields remains problematic. Community service respondents identified what they considered were significant problems associated with the structure, attendance and involvement of police in these meetings. Problems identified include inadequate representation at police-community meetings of all groups such as youth. In addition, some community service provider participants raised the concern that police fail to act upon the feedback received at these meetings and identified a reluctance of police to become involved and interact with community members at these meetings. It is argued that the actions of these police demonstrated their unwillingness to listen to the concerns and help improve the living circumstances of the Macquarie Fields residents. Furthermore, police respondents considered that police-community partnerships at Macquarie Fields consisted of a one way flow of information in which residents provide police information concerning local criminal activity. None of the street police interviewed articulated the belief that a police-community partnership involved police
listening to the concerns of the community, seeking suggestions to help solve crime problems or involving the community directly in crime prevention.

It is contended that police partnership with the community is an essential element of community policing and that accountability to the community is facilitated through police involvement in partnership projects associated with community consultative committees. Police, through their involvement in community meetings, are required to listen to the concerns of the community regarding crime and fear of crime problems and in partnership with community members, implement solutions in attempt to solve those problems. In turn, this is an expression of accountability, as police are required to report back to community committees concerning the success or otherwise of their attempts. In order for a police-community partnership to be successful it must possess the characteristics of mutual trust, joint cooperation, power sharing and police and community working together to solve crime problems and reduce the fear of crime and neighbourhood decay. Findings from this study suggest that street police have failed to embrace and practice these essential community policing characteristics in Macquarie Fields.

This study also identified views of community service providers that police often adopted an adversarial approach whilst carrying out ‘moving on’ and searching strategies in their attempts to reduce the local crime rate. These tactics, predominantly aimed towards groups of youths socialising in public spaces, are often conducted in an aggressive, confrontational manner by younger, inexperienced police. In addition, it would appear that these work priorities are set by the patrol’s senior management team based on the intelligence available concerning criminal activity in the Macquarie Fields.
area. For instance, police manager Steve spoke of identifying a ‘pattern of crime’ and tasking street police to ‘punish that area’ in terms of utilising ‘move-ons and search’ powers.

The problematic relationship between the Macquarie Fields community and local police occurred despite the attempts of police management to better serve and be more accountable to the local community. Responses of police and community members alike suggest that Macquarie fields police management has implemented positive community engagement strategies, such as greater police attendance and involvement in community meetings; camps that provide an opportunity for police and local youth to interact; and a customer service delivery program which focuses on providing feedback and information to victims of crime. However, despite these initiatives, all was not well. Police managers acknowledged the difficulties in having street police adopt community policing philosophies. Police manager Bob, for instance, spoke of the reluctance of police to ‘deal with the community in a better light’. In addition, variable notions held by police concerning community accountability and partnership, combined negatively with crime reduction strategies mean that relationships between police and the Macquarie Fields community remain tense and sometimes adversarial. In fact, views were divided amongst community service provider and police participants as to whether there had been any improvements in police-community relations since the 2005 riots which occurred at Macquarie Fields.
The following chapter, Chapter Seven discusses this study’s findings about participants’ views concerning possible causes of the poor police-community relationship occurring at Macquarie Fields. It is contended that negative police attitudes towards members of the Macquarie Fields community, combined with police perceptions of difference between themselves and community members, have adversely impacted upon police notions of accountability, partnership and subsequent relations with the community. This, in turn, has negatively manifested itself in the adversarial manner in which police conduct themselves towards community members during searching and ‘moving on’ strategies undertaken to reduce the local crime rate.
CHAPTER 7
UNDERLYING FACTORS THAT EXPLAIN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MACQUARIE FIELDS POLICE AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Introduction

This chapter explores some of the underlying factors which appear to explain the problematic relationship between Macquarie Fields police and their local community. As outlined in Chapter Six, despite the attempts of police management at Macquarie Fields to be more accountable to the local community, a poor relationship continues to exist between street police and the local community members with whom they come in contact.

The findings presented here suggest that a significant contributing factor to problematic police notions of accountability, community partnership and relations which describe the Macquarie Fields police-community relationship, are the negative attitudes held by police towards the local community. Whilst there have been diverse examples of the types of problems that exist, in this chapter, it is suggested that there may be deficiencies in the education and training of police that contribute to the relationship problems. These issues include; the initial shock experienced by police commencing duties at Macquarie Fields and the inadequacies in police training in assisting police to interact effectively with youth.
Police attitudes towards the Macquarie Fields community

This section examines the views expressed by police respondents concerning the local community members with whom they come in contact. It would appear that police contact with residents of Macquarie Fields, a socially disorganised community, has adversely impacted upon the professional attitudes of police and their perceptions of the extent of criminal deviance amongst community members. Furthermore, perceptions held by police concerning community members’ disrespect and negative attitudes towards police has unfavourably influenced police attitudes regarding victim deservedness and suspicion concerning suspects. It is argued that predominantly negative police attitudes have adversely influenced problematic notions held by police respondents concerning accountability and partnership, exacerbating the poor relations between Macquarie Fields police and their local community, further reinforcing the negative attitudes in a vicious cycle.

This theme of ‘police attitudes’ was subsequently divided into: appreciation; being used; frustration; respect; belonging to the community; opinions of victims; views of suspects; stereotyping; observations of professional conduct and motivations for professional conduct:
Appreciation

Street police participants’ views varied in regards to whether they felt appreciated by the local community. For instance, Reg considered a lack of appreciation existed:

I don’t think so, no, some do some don’t but a lot of them in my experience don’t appreciate and have no respect for you.

Les compared his community interactions at Macquarie Fields with that of his friends’ community interactions within their patrols:

No. I have mates in other places, and it’s a completely different kettle of fish, their jaws drop when they hear how we get treated and people’s different responses. Even the jobs that we do are completely different to other places. When you get strangled or assaulted on a fortnightly basis, like, you put it down to a fortnight, you have a fight with someone just because you are there trying to stop a domestic, or a noise complaint, or something like that, and they decide to take it on their own bat to try to go toe to toe with you.

Martin, although of the opinion that community members did appreciate the work he was undertaking, did consider that this was restricted to certain sections of the community:

I think the majority do. You do get the comments that you are doing a good job in a tough situation. That is always good. However, that is only certain parts of the neighbourhood where that comes from.

Henry commented, though, that whilst most community members did appreciate the work he did, the young people displayed a lack of appreciation:
The majority do. The victims do. If they are juveniles, not really, they don’t have much respect for us. The adult ones tend to be OK when they’re not intoxicated. The juvenile age group I mean is fourteen to sixteen.

**Being Used**

Sixty six percent of street police respondents considered they were being used by the community members with whom they interacted. Police respondents felt that, in many instances, they were called upon by residents, not because they required help, but rather to instigate retribution against another individual.

*They usually have got their own agenda. I find that, only in the short period of time I have been here, there is not a lot of respect. There is some, but not a lot of it, and usually when we are called upon, it’s for their own agenda and not for the purposes of providing help. It’s basically to get back at their partner. A lot of them kind of take it into their own hands. (Ralph)*

In fact, police participant Mike articulated the extent of police scepticism regarding the motives of individuals who provide information to police concerning local criminal activity:

*Being a cop, you are naturally sceptical, you get information that is really good information, but you are always questioning, why is that person giving you information? Because they are cutting your turf? Or stepping on other people’s toes? Do they want them out of the way? Being a complete and utter cynic, you feel like you are doing their dirty work for them. Have they got a job competition or a stolen job competition they want out of the way? Is someone else knocking over cars that they want to steal? Ring up and dob them in for*
knocking off the cars. The competition is out of the way, the police took them out of the way for them. Sometimes you do have to question where your information comes from. I’ll lock up a car thief and I’ll lock up a drug dealer, no worries. But sometimes I get a little worried about where that information comes from and what its underlying purpose is.

**Frustration**

Seventy percent of the operational police interviewees expressed frustration concerning the work they undertake to assist victims. They considered that, whilst they do their best to assist individuals who require assistance, once that matter has been resolved, the individual shows disrespect to them in further interactions:

>You get frustrated, I must admit, you try hard and then they sort of don’t care. I’ve had dealings where I have dealt with people who have come in here complaining about being assaulted and things like that, and you try your hardest to prosecute the other person. You take him to court and you do the right thing and you make sure that they go to court, you bring the victim up to date. You do all this type of work and, when the matter is all done and finished, you deal with the victim a couple weeks later in the street and they have got no respect for you whatsoever. You get frustrated. You have done all this work for them, helped them out and all that, and then they just disrespect you. At the end of the day, it’s our job. It’s just a personal thing. You think well, I helped you out all that time, and that’s the way you sort of give thanks. (Arthur)
Similarly, police participant Bev, expressed her frustration concerning the lack of recognition afforded to police at Macquarie Fields in terms of the difficulties in the job they undertake:

_We are always open to complaints and inquiries, you know people complaining to the Ombudsman, they want our numbers, but where do we go? Where is our system in place? We are victims. Nobody cares and they wonder why we have psychological abuse and alcohol addictions later on, and stress and gray hairs, and heart attacks and stress and pains, hurt on duties, and people going off sick and divorces, and do they care? No, there is nothing in place for us. We are just the cops._

**Respect**

This study found that all street police participants considered they were not respected by the community members with whom they interacted during the course of their daily duties. George for example, when asked whether he felt respected by the community, responded:

_Probably not. I think we are a service, but only when they want us on their terms. I guess we interfere with their lives. We go into the houses and do things that they don’t want us to do and therefore we are interference to what they’re doing._

Jack provided a response typical of police respondents. That is, individuals residing within Department of Housing communities, due to their upbringing and lack of understanding of middle class values, do not have respect for police. Furthermore, the response tends to suggest that police perceive a difference in social class between themselves and some of the community members whom they serve:
It depends upon what type of class of person they are. Whether they have grown up with housing areas, or whether they have grown up in normal social life, like, the economic sort of background, like the everyday middle class people. They respect you and understand that we are there to help them. Then you have got the ones that are below that. They think that everybody owes them something, including us.

Other police participants such as Lydia felt that the level of respect police received from a community member was dependant upon the circumstances of the interaction:

No. I just think I guess it depends whether you are treating them, if you are treating them as a victim and things are going their way, and then you get a matter of respect, they are polite. If things aren’t going their way, whether they are a victim or an offender, then you are getting a very negative attitude.

Belonging to the community

Police respondents were divided in their views as to whether they felt they belonged to the community. Some such as Ralph considered they were not part of the community:

It’s a bit more of an us versus them. I feel part of the community at the police station. I try to distance myself from them, I just come to work, do my work and then leave and go home. I don’t really feel part of the community.

Whilst others such as Nigel did consider they felt part of the community:

Yes you are always out on the street, the people you come across you sort of see them all the time.
However, police participants Kylie and Lydia identified the general duties policing role as an impediment to those officers belonging to the local community:

*No, because we are just general duties officers. I think if you worked more as the youth liaison officer and all that stuff you have a lot more to do with the community. We just go from domestic to domestic.* (Kylie)

*Not really. I guess some officers within the station who are in positions which are community based, they probably feel more involved, because they are taking part in, I guess, positive programs, more positive interactions, rather than the majority of ours which is more negative. I think that would probably make you feel more part of the community.* (Lydia)

**Deservedness of victims**

The theme of ‘victim deservedness’ and in particular whether police considered all victims they come in contact equally deserving of their attention, met with a varied response from participants. Some such as Ian and Arthur, considered that all victims, regardless of their prior interactions with police, deserve the same attention.

*Definitely, I think every victim deserves help regardless if you have dealt with them prior in a bad way, like when they were a person of interest. If they are a victim, of course you need to treat them like a victim.* (Ian)

*I would say yes, most definitely, it doesn’t matter if they’re from Housing Commission or any other area. They are all victims, even if it’s the smallest thing, say, for our job, a break and enter, or if they have been seriously assaulted, they should get the same treatment.* (Arthur)
However, the majority of police respondents expressed the view that not all victims of crime were equally deserving of police attention. There were a number of different rationales put forward by the participants in explaining their views. Some participants, such as Naomi and Ben considered that some victims were not equally deserving, as they refused to help themselves by avoiding the circumstances which led them to becoming a victim:

*I wouldn’t say there is a certain group, but I would say that people who constantly call us up and we have been there for the same thing twenty times before. At what point do they go, ‘I need to help myself here, maybe looking at living somewhere else’? That’s when I get a little bit, like, what are we doing? Nothing has changed, we have told them to change the number, we have told her not to have him back in her house. At some point that’s when I get the ones that you have gone there that many times that you think they’re not going to listen to anything I say.* (Naomi)

*I think the victims don’t do enough to help themselves in a sense. As I explained with domestic violence, I can extend my hand so far, the rest, to grab my hand and run with it, needs to be done by you. I can offer you a certain amount of things. I can offer you AVOs. At the end of the day, you’re the one that has to hold your hand out and say, “I want your help”. We can give it to you, but it needs to be fifty fifty. It’s not good enough that I do ten hours of paper work for the victim to say, “No I’m back in love with him and I’ll cop a flogging next week”. (Ben)*
Other police participants, such as Bree, felt that some victims were not genuine, but, rather, were trying to use the criminal justice system to secure a transfer to another Department of Housing estate:

There are some just trying to get to event numbers so they can get transferred. There are a lot of motives behind their interactions with us. Most of the time you can pick out the genuine ones that do need help, that do want to change.

However, Kylie, Mike and Haley provided responses typical of most police respondents. These participants did not consider a victim of crime equally deserving of police attention when the victim had previously been dealt with by police as an offender:

No. I’ve only come across a couple of the crooks in our patrol. They are the first that we lock up and they tell us all to get fucked, fuck off and everything else but then they are the first to ring us if there is a big drama in the house and they are basically wasting our time. We have got more important things to do than chase them up, ringing us a thousand times and we rock up and they tell us to get stuffed. (Kylie)

No, I don’t think the ones you locked up last week for stealing, and then they end up calling you because they have become a victim for stealing. I mean, come on, you can’t have it both ways. (Mike)

Most of them, no. I have only come across a small handful of victims who I actually felt sorry for and thought you gotta do something big for these people. The rest of them, you just think, you are not a victim, last week I locked you up
for doing the exact same thing, so how are you a victim now? You still have to treat them as a victim and pretend that you give a dam, but, at the end of the day, you couldn’t give a shit what they’re thinking. Because I know last week I locked them up for the same thing. All they are doing is crying wolf to get some kind of attention, and it’s all pay back against all the other people in the neighbourhood. That’s why they call us. (Haley)

Jack considered that in terms of domestic violence matters, victims of crime at Macquarie Fields are far and few between:

In the whole time I have been here, in two years, I can honestly say I have only had one true domestic violence victim, where I can say the laws worked perfectly for us and perfectly for her and I can be proud for what I have done for her and how everything has worked. In that whole time, that is the only time that I have ever said, “Yes that’s a true domestic violence victim” and “that’s a true person of interest and I am really proud of what I have done and that was where the law has benefited me”. Until now, I have never had a true victim and it’s just not women, males are victims, too, as there are some pretty vicious women out there. But they all antagonize each other, they use AVOs to bait and stir each other. They will take out an AVO ‘not to be assaulted, not to be harassed’, but they still want the person there, and the type of people you deal with, you don’t dangle carrots in front of these people, because they smash you up, and that is where they play games with each other. There has only been one incident out of doing one or two a night, in two years, which I consider was genuine.
**Views of suspects**

In regards to police participants’ views of suspects, some participants, such as Les, considered they should be treated the same:

> You’ve gotta go with what you’ve got. It might be a suspect, because there’s a reason that they are a suspect. You have to treat everything on its merits. You know they may be the biggest crook in the world, and you can ping them for this thing. Who cares what they’ve done in the past.

However, the response provided by Martin best summed up the general consensus amongst police participants, that views of a suspect are formed by the level of respect with which that individual displays to police:

> I don’t believe in the same way. Personally, I mean I take it from a point of view, if I go up to them and initiate a conversation and do what I have to do, if they are treating me with some sort of respect, then they will get their respect back. If they’re sitting there swearing, calling me every name under the sun, well then, I didn’t join this job to cop abuse from these sort of people. So you put an end to it pretty quick, just chuck them pretty quick into the back of the truck and we will deal with it later.

**Observations of professional conduct**

During the course of this study, police participants were unobtrusively observed performing their duties and interacting with the public. These observations revealed a high standard of professional police conduct. For example, police participants Ben and Ian were observed attending a local residence following a complaint received from a
member of the public who had witnessed his elderly neighbour’s home being broken into by a number of youths:

Attended job of break and enter in progress at Ingleburn. The witness, a neighbour, saw three youths leaving their next door neighbour’s house and contacted the police. Ben and Ian searched for the youths but could not locate them. We then attended the scene of the break and enter. Ben and Ian spoke well to the neighbour who reported the incident. The daughter of the owner, who was in hospital, attended the residence and Ben and Ian spoke professionally to her. Scientific offices came and took fingerprints.

(Observation notes)
Further professional conduct was observed on the part of Ben and Ian when they attended a complaint involving a potentially volatile situation regarding neighbours arguing over money:

*We resumed patrolling and attended a job of a neighbourhood dispute at Minto. This was occurring at two adjoining Housing Commission townhouses. The dispute was over money which a resident had claimed he had loaned to another resident. They had made threats to each other and a table had been thrown into one of their yards. Ben and Ian interacted well with the people and calmed the situation down. The two parties were spoken to separately and Ben and Ian defused the situation.* (Observation notes)

In addition, police participants Haley and Ian were observed interacting effectively with a large group of local residents. These people had gathered out of concern for their neighbour, who, suffering from a mental condition, was required to be forcibly removed from her residence and admitted to a hospital for protection:

*Haley and Ian attended another job concerning the scheduling of a woman. Police and ambulance were already at the scene. Haley and Ian were not required but they interacted well with other residents who came to see what was going on.* (Observation notes)

**Motivation for professional conduct**

Although police participants displayed professional conduct during this study’s observations, subsequent interviews revealed that the underlying motivation for such professional conduct was not borne out of an obligation to better serve the community but rather a desire to avoid disciplinary action. The phrase, ‘CARE Principle’, an acronym for ‘Cover Arse Retain Employment’ was mentioned a number of times:
You don’t really care about what people on the street are thinking. As long as you are covering your arse at the station. We maintain The CARE principle, Cover Arse Retain Employment. At the end of the day I still feel we have a responsibility to respond to every call we receive even when you know they are absolute retards. You are never going to do anything to help them anyway because there’s nothing you can do. You still have to go out and talk to them and pretend you give a dam. (Haley)

More than anything you are always hearing the ‘care’ factor, ‘Cover Arse Retain Employment’. I feel it is a good little thing to keep in mind. (Martin)

It would seem that these street police do not feel appreciated except by small sections of the community. When assistance is provided to them they worry that the motivation for such is self-interested. The police feel like unsupported victims, separate to and different from the Macquarie Fields community; not understanding of the lack of problem-solving skills in certain sections of the Macquarie Fields community, they blame the victims. Furthermore, the police see their good work as consisting of the ‘CARE’ principle which is about their survival and not about customer service. These mostly negative views held by police impact adversely upon their notions of accountability and partnership towards the community. This in turn unfavourably impacts upon the way in which police interact with the local community members with whom they come in contact. This then contributes to the poor ongoing relationship between police and community members. The following section describes several factors relating to the policing role at Macquarie Fields which have been found to influence the negative attitudes of street police towards community members:
Factors impacting upon police attitudes towards the Macquarie Fields community

This section considers the possibility that the attitudes of Macquarie Fields police towards their local community have been adversely influenced by the confrontational nature of policing duties there, particularly with Department of Housing residents and young people, whilst police recognise the problems of stereotyping.

Police contact with the Macquarie Fields community

All police respondents identified that most of their contact with the Macquarie Fields community occurs with the Department of Housing residents:

_The majority of our work is to do with the Department of Housing._ (Martin)

Ralph, along with others, expressed the view that all local criminals come from the Department of Housing estates:

_The crooks are normally all your housos. They’ve got nothing else better to do than steal from the rich and give to the poor basically._

Police manager Steve, however expressed the different view that most community members in Macquarie Fields were law abiding, with only a small percentage causing police problems:

_Ninety percent of our community are good people, although they live in difficult circumstances. It’s that ten percent that causes you all the problems. They are the ones that ninety percent of the time police are dealing with._
In regards to police interaction with community members, who are not Department of Housing residents, would appear to only occur when they are victims of a crime:

*You do come across people that are actually out there working making a living and stuff, but usually they are the victims, they’re not the crooks.* (Ralph)

*The ones we don’t deal with are the ones with a little bit of money, the middle class workers. We come around because they are being broken into repeatedly, or cars stolen from their areas, they have what have-nots haven’t got.* (Mitch)

In addition, police respondents said that almost all of their workload emanated from youths residing within the Department of Housing communities. Responses provided by participants such as Mike and Reg were typical:

*It would be younger kids; twelve to seventeen seem to be our biggest offenders and re-offenders. We’re always chasing kids. You look at the break and enter merchants around here, and most of these are mainly kids, all being dealt with under the Young Offenders Act.* (Mike)

*But it’s all the young people, they don’t go to school, they don’t work, they hit the grog hard, they get into the drugs and they start doing break and enters and they get in with the wrong crowd. I would say they cause us ninety percent of the work.* (Reg)

**Police-local youth interactions**

Eighty eight percent of street police interviewed indicated they were not respected by the local youth. Haley, Mike and Nigel provided typical responses.
Most of the areas around here, there is a pretty low respect for authority.

That’s just not police. Any form of parental authority. They just don’t care, it’s a farcical thing, I think. (Haley)

We have got four and five year olds yelling out, “Fuck you, coppers” and sticking their fingers up at us as we drive pass, mainly because we have locked their mums and dads up, or their older brothers and sisters. (Mike)

I feel with dealing with young people, they are the most challenging. It’s the most challenging part of working in this area, especially the young people that live in the Housing Commission area. It’s to do with their level of respect.

(Nigel)

Police participant Reg recalled a specific recent incident in which he was subjected to verbal abuse by a young person:

For example I dealt with a little boy last week. He is twelve to thirteen. In relation to a nice old lady from the Housing Commission, he badly damaged her car and, when I tried to speak to him, the only words I got out of his mouth was, “Fuck off you dog cunt, I’m not speaking to you, you fuckin’ pig”, and he spat on the police car and he is never going to have my respect. His mum was there, just laughing at him, and when I told him he was being charged, he rang up and complained about me, claiming it was harassment. There’s nothing harassing about me doing my job and charging someone.
In addition, police participants felt that the cause of this disrespect is parental influence. Police participant Jack’s response typifies the general consensus amongst police respondents concerning this issue:

*Their parents instil in them that we are shit, so they think we are shit.*

Furthermore, police respondents expressed the view that this negative parental influence is borne out of adults’ previous negative interactions with police:

*I mean, obviously, members of their family are getting locked up, so they hate us, the kids learn that from the parents. I mean, I have heard parents encouraging five year olds by saying, “You don’t have to tell them anything”, so, yeah, there is very little respect from certain parts of the Housing Commission area.* (Jenny)

*And, also, this cyclic sort of situation in there, that cops walk in, dad’s belted mum, the kids have seen dad belt mum, and it’s still dad that they hero worship. The next thing, the cops come in and they see the cops in a bad light. The cops wrestling the kids’ dad, and then mum changes her mind and she’s not happy either, and it becomes very nasty, very difficult situation. The cops lose out which ever way you go.* (Steve)

The observations of Sam, a community service provider respondent appear to support the perceptions of police concerning young peoples’ lack of respect:

*My clients that have had contact with the police despise them, they really despise the police and they call them names. I’ve come across clients that are actually training their kids to call the police ‘pigs’. ‘There goes the bacon now’, things like that, and that is a five year old child they’re training to hate*
the police. The parents use every swear word imaginable to describe the police. I would say that a large percentage of my clients despise the police and these have had contact with the police either by being arrested or being pulled over.

In contrast to these accounts of animosity between young people and police, observations conducted throughout this study of police participants interacting with local youth revealed a high standard of professional conduct by police:

-Out on patrol with Naomi and Lydia. Responded to a call over the police radio that a young girl, possibly armed with a knife, was involved in a domestic dispute. We arrived at the scene and we saw a young girl in a distressed state, the mother of this girl was being abusive towards her. Naomi and Lydia acted professionally during this situation. The girl was in a very emotional state and there were a couple of young males present who were also visibly upset. I had the feeling, initially, that the situation could have escalated, but Naomi and Lydia diffused a potentially volatile situation. After some discussion, Naomi convinced the mother that it would be in everyone’s interest to allow the young girl to collect some of her belongings. The mother eventually agreed to this, and the girl collected her belongings and left. Naomi and Lydia caught up to the young girl and her partner down the street and gave them a lift to the train station, where the girl was going to catch a train to Newcastle. (Observation notes)

However, other observations conducted of police interacting with the community during this study did reveal occasions in which respondents appeared uncomfortable during their interactions with local youth. The most difficulties were within the 13-30 age groups:
During the course of our patrol, Nigel spoke to a young boy approximately thirteen years old who was walking along the street. I have been out on patrol with Nigel before and I have observed him being unfriendly to the youths he comes in contact with. He doesn't appear comfortable in talking to young people. In an interview I previously conducted with him, he indicated that he felt the youths in the area were disrespectful. The young person who we spoke to today was not disrespectful, but Nigel still didn’t appear to be comfortable in speaking to him. (Observation notes)

During the course of another observation of police respondents performing their duties, Naomi and Lydia were observed dealing with a situation at a school involving young people. A youth was heard taunting the officers. Taking into account Naomi’s length of service at Macquarie Fields, her response was somewhat surprising:

*We went to the principal’s office and, in order to get there, we were required to walk through a room in which a class was in progress. The children would have been around 13-14 age group. One of the children sang out, “Coppers punch you in the face”*. Naomi, who was beside me when this was said, appeared to have heard the child’s comment, she blushed and looked away from the children. I was surprised somewhat, as she didn’t appear to be comfortable when faced with abusive fourteen year olds. Naomi has good knowledge of practice and procedure but was uncomfortable in the presence of these young people who were in a rather controlled environment. (Observation notes)
These observations of young police appearing uncomfortable interacting with youth appear to be somewhat supported by the comments from community service respondents, such as Andy, who said:

\[\text{That what happens when the younger police come across a group sometimes, they’re on the defensive, but it comes across as being on the offensive. Maybe they don’t know how to be defensive, they have to be offensive.}\]

In addition, community service provider participant, Andrew, a teacher mentioned:

\[\text{The main negative stuff, lately, that I have been witnessing is with the younger police, and I think it is because they are closer in age and there is a sense of fear within them of not being able to maintain some kind of control, instead of these police dealing with some sort of elasticity and calmness.}\]

The removal of a fulltime Youth Liaison Officer at Macquarie Fields appears to have exacerbated the poor relationship between police and local youths. All community service provider participants praised the efforts of previous Youth Liaison Officers and the assistance they provided to young people in the community:

\[\text{I think, from the young people I have had dealings with, feel the police, and, in particular, the Youth Liaison Officer, has tried very very hard to build bridges.}\]

(Debbie)

\[\text{Police like the Youth Liaison Officer do a fantastic job, he has respect, the kids respect him, the community respect him and I think it’s because he is just such a personable bloke. He treats people with dignity and respect, even when they are screwed up.}\]

(Wendy)
However, Mike, a policing participant, highlighted the fact that, due to staffing shortages in recent times, there has not been an officer at Macquarie Fields who has been assigned to the full time role of Youth Liaison Officer:

Jim Smith came in and did the liaison policing. He stopped, and he’s just been transferred as well, and Julian Jones is the current Liaison Officer, but he is a Jack of all trades. They have got him in filling in a variety of jobs, so he doesn’t get the time, I don’t think, to give it the attention that it needs. Unfortunately I don’t think we have the resources now to have someone do purely what Jim did.

The reasons behind the withdrawal of a fulltime Youth Liaison Officer at Macquarie Fields was addressed by police manager Bob during further communications. Bob stated:

…at the time given a significant number of staff were on long term sick leave, secondments etc and operational needs. At the time there was no full time Youth Liaison Officer although the responsibilities for the position were being shared by a number of staff attached to the Crime Management Unit. We have and have for some time two (2) full- time Youth Liaison Officers (YLO).

When further asked whom would have made that decision. Bob responded:

It would have been a joint decision by the SMT (Senior Management Team), although the Superintendent has the overriding decision.
This section described this study’s findings concerning police perceptions that local youth treat them with disrespect. It would appear that the poor relationship between police and local youths is further exacerbated by the removal of a full time police youth liaison officer at Macquarie Fields.

**Stereotyping**

Even though police at Macquarie Fields are coming in contact with a small percentage of the Department of Housing residents, it is these predominantly negative interactions which appear to impact adversely upon police attitudes concerning the Macquarie Fields communities. This issue of stereotyping was touched upon by some of the police respondents:

*You can have 27% Housing Commission, but there are probably only 5% that you deal with. A larger portion of the Housing Commission, especially in the area where the riots were, 90% of those people you never speak to them, you never have anything to do with them, they are just your old style Housing Commission. They like their beers, they like their darts, they go away camping. But then there are the ones that believe that the world owes them something. Unfortunately, they all get put in as the same type of people.* (Jack)

*I suppose it’s just the case that it’s very easy here to run into a very stereotypical attitude of Housing Commission people.* (Martin)

This issue of police stereotyping members of Macquarie Fields communities was also reported by community service provider respondent Tim, a local youth counsellor:

*But I think what happens is the community gets generalised, and the good people of this community sort of suffers, because they get kind of pigeon holed*
with the bad element, and the good people end up getting treated badly by the police.

Police perceptions of difference between themselves and Macquarie Fields residents

In addition to the previously discussed negative Macquarie Fields police attitudes and stereotyping of local residents, all police respondents considered there were vast lifestyle and moral differences between themselves and the community members whom they police. These differences were classified into the themes of:

- ambition
- care of children
- morals and values
- drug usage
- education
- employment
- hygiene
- motivation
- respect for authority and family.

It is considered that these perceived differences identified by police participants create further distance between police and the community members whom they serve. In addition, as illustrated in Diagram 2 (p.288), it is also contended that police perceptions of difference is a contributing factor to the poor relationship experienced by Macquarie Fields police and their local community. Responses provided by police participants
would tend to suggest the view they are policing an underclass who they don’t consider as equals.

**Ambition**

Sixty six percent of operational police interviewees considered that the Macquarie Fields residents they were coming into contact with lacked ambition. The response of Ralph was typical:

*The other thing is I have always had a lot of ambition through my life to get a career, to do well for myself and for others. Whereas these guys, they don’t have a direction, they live in their own little world with their own little rules.*

**Care of Children**

Care of children, was a difference raised by 51% of street police participants. Police considered there were vast differences in the way they cared and supervised their own children, compared to community members at Macquarie Fields. Bree provided a typical response concerning this issue:

*In my lifestyle and values there is certainly a difference. For example, with children, a lot of the younger children are allowed to run around unsupervised, without any parent there to control them. They’re not dressed appropriately. In this day and age, you are always concerned about kids. I don’t know if I’m being paranoid, but I would never ever allow my child to be left unattended in an area or unsupervised. I always know where he is and what he’s doing and I notice it doesn’t worry these people very much and I say to them, “What are you doing with your child?” and they say, “He’s all right, I know where he is”. (Bree)*
Lydia touched upon another common issue discussed by police respondents, the young age of mothers in the community:

_The difference is just the way you run your day to day life. Like the structures to your life, like the things that are important to me are different to them. Like the idea of family and relationships is different. I don’t have children yet, but, to me, having a child is the most important thing, it would be a huge decision in my life and, when it comes to that, it’s going to be the hugest deal ever. But then I see these sixteen year olds running around after their babies and its nothing to them. So, I sort of think, that’s a huge difference, even girls that are my age who have two to three kids and it’s nothing._ (Lydia)

**Morals and Values**

‘Morals and values’ was another theme of difference identified by police respondents. The responses of Ralph, Haley and Abby were typical:

_These guys, they don’t have a direction, they live in their own little world with their own little rules and their own values and morals. They are family-oriented, but for all the wrong reasons. They won’t seek help and they’ll take things into their own hands._ (Ralph),

_I have always been brought up in a very good family, so I’m very family oriented and I love spending family time. But I feel, with some of the community, they couldn’t give a shit, basically. They will bash each other for no particular reason. They don’t care about it, whereas, if it happened in my family, which happened recently, we would sit around and talk about it._ (Haley)
Like, being young and having all the children. Like, I am 23 and sometimes I go to a domestic and I ask them for their date of birth and it will be the same as mine, and I ask them whether they have got any children, and they will say yes, “there are 4 or 5”. I can’t imagine being that age and having so many children, sometimes its different fathers, single parents. Probably that’s the way our main clients live their lives. The main way which most police live our lives is too different, very different, very different way of life, I can’t imagine ringing 000 because the neighbour yelled. (Abby)

**Drug Usage**

Drug usage, in particular cannabis and alcohol abuse, were identified by police respondents as another differing factor between local community members and themselves. William, for instance, considered all residents with whom he came in contact with abused legal and illicit drugs:

> They’re all on the drink, or cannabis is the biggest drug out here. They’re all on cannabis, they all have bongs in the house and this is how they live.

In contrast, Reg, whilst identifying a difference in drug usage between local community members and him, did acknowledge, that not all community members were participating in such activity:

> There is most definitely, though, a difference. I feel that I am a lot different to a lot of the people that we deal with. I am not a drug user, not a chronic alcoholic, I have family values. On occasion, when you come in contact with people that are drug users, and a lot of those people don’t have the family oriented values and things like that and are criminals, whereas I’m on the other
side of the fence. I’m not a criminal, and I’m not a drug user. Like I said though, that is not everyone.

**Education**

Police participants identified education as another way in which there was a significant difference between themselves and the local residents with whom they come in contact with at Macquarie Fields:

*There is a complete difference. I think I’m relatively educated and I know a lot of them aren’t, but that doesn’t stand in my way of communication. You just have to lower yourself down to them, not lowering, but to their level of speaking and thinking.* (Ben)

*The main difference is the level of intellect and education.* (Abby)

**Employment**

Interviews conducted with police respondents revealed their belief that there was a significant difference between themselves and community members in terms of employment. In addition, responses would appear to indicate that police regard employment as an important component for community membership:

*The general population around here consists of low socio-economic. They are living in Department of Housing, their parents don’t work. It’s not all of them, but it’s the vast majority of them. Where I come from, a family with very strict rules and everyone worked from the moment you are old enough to work.*

(Haley)

*A lot of people get satisfaction out of the jobs, I suppose that makes me feel part of the community. That’s something that they don’t experience, they don’t feel*
involved in the community, they don’t have that level of participation in the community. In some ways, I don’t think they can relate to us, like, having a 38 hour a week job, and you go to work and get your pay, and you step inside their houses, and the way in which some of them live, there is very much a distance in every factor of the lifestyle. (Abby)

**Hygiene**

‘Hygiene’ was another theme in which police identified the existence of a difference between themselves and the local residents with whom they come in contact:

*They have a willingness to accept lower standards of cleanliness and hygiene. I think it comes down to what we accept and what we think is the general norm. Living in everyone’s back pockets, dirty kids, dirty houses is every day for these people and it is something I think comes from growing up in an environment. They don’t know what is entirely acceptable, or what is the best way to parent, or run a house, or anything like that. (Mike)*

Observations conducted of police on patrol appear to confirm their views concerning a difference between themselves and community members in regards to hygiene. For instance, whilst on patrol with police participant Reg, the following incident was observed:

*Attended a location where a woman approximately 27 years old, affected by drugs, needed to be scheduled. The woman was aggressive towards police and tried to spit whilst being placed in the back of the truck. The woman spitting, and the possible danger of hepatitis and Aids, was a topic of conversation amongst police. When we arrived at the hospital, the woman, although handcuffed, became aggressive within the hospital. She tried to head butt Reg*
and kick him in the groin. She was taken to a room and was sedated by hospital staff. Reg was very concerned that he may have received a cut on his hands from the woman. He immediately washed his hands and face with antiseptic gel at the hospital, and then, for the next two hours, every fifteen minutes or so, would check and wash his hands with antiseptic gel from a dispenser he had with his personal belongings in the car. He referred to the antiseptic gel as ‘Trog’ juice. I asked him what he thought about the woman and the incident. He replied that he thought she would have hepatitis and he was worried if he had received a cut from her. Reg and his patrol partner, Eugene, also spoke about the likelihood of the woman carrying Aids. Eugene reassured Reg that he thought the woman was too ‘meaty’ to be carrying the Aids virus (Observation notes)

**Motivation**

In regards to the theme of ‘motivation’, police respondent Bonnie, having grown up in a Department of Housing area, still felt there was a difference between herself and the community members she policed at Macquarie Fields:

> They expect a lot, a lot of communities which would be similar to this, and I grew up in a similar type of area. We had nothing like that, we had no community or external support and if you wanted to get somewhere you had to work at it. I think we have taken that away from them by offering them so much for free without having to strive for anything.
Respect for authority and family

All police participants considered there was a significant difference concerning respect for authority and in particular respect for police. Both Oscar and Henry reflected upon their upbringings and how they were taught to respect police. They compared this to the lack of respect they receive whilst performing their duties:

*Like they have different views in relation to police and stuff like that. I know when I grew up, my parents were from a middle class family sort of thing, respect the law, respect your teachers.* (Oscar)

*I think the way I was brought up compared to the way they are brought up, it’s a lot different. When I was growing up I was taught to have respect for the police and a lot of these ones don’t have respect.* (Henry)

Respect for family was considered by police participants as another difference between themselves and the community members with whom they were coming in contact:

*We differ a lot and respect for your family, I see a lot of difference there from what I respect my family.* (Ian)

*The way that they talk to people, swearing and the way they treat their parents as well. I would never do that to my parents.* (Henry)

In contrast, police participant Les expressed the view that no differences existed between him and the community members he policed:

*Not really, I have lived in Housing Commission nearly three years, and that was not when I was young either, so we are from the same playing field, or we should be.*
In addition to Les’s belief regarding a lack of difference, some police respondents whilst identifying differences, also expressed empathy towards those community members with whom they have contact:

_I have found and dealt with some really lovely people around here who live in houses that are completely and utterly abysmal, kids walking in pizza on the floor. Some of them are very nice, genuine people, they have just not experienced a different way of living. They just have never been exposed or learned skills appropriate to deal with those situations._ (Mike)

Lydia recognized the devastating impact which social disadvantage can have upon some people’s lives:

_I think I can empathize with them. If I put myself in their position, I can understand. I would never look down on anybody or they’re below me, just because I don’t live their life style. I think the majority of people in this area are products of their own environment. They sort of can’t help it. It’s very hard to get out of that sort of situation._

Bonnie provided a response which was typical of most police respondents concerning empathy and the community members whom they police:

_As I said I came from a similar background, and my education was pretty poor up until I became an adult. I wouldn’t say that their background and status is any different, but I would say that my attitude to other people is different. I believe that my morals and ethics are a little bit different and I don’t know that this has anything to do with status. I grew up the same way, but my values are different. But for the grace of God, I could’ve been in their situation and they_
could have been in mine only that I chose not to be. I believe I grew up in spite of my childhood, and I believe that they feel that, because of their childhood, they deserve something better and something extra which no one in this world does. It is something you go and work for. I don’t think they have had that instilled in them.

All of these views indicate that police respondents perceive significant lifestyle and moral differences between themselves and community members. These perceptions of difference, combined with constant negative contact with community members, are likely to have adversely impacted upon police attitudes towards Macquarie Fields communities. The following section explores this study’s findings regarding police education and its possible relationship with the poor police-community relations at Macquarie Fields.

**Police education**

In light of this study’s findings that a poor relationship exists between police and members of the Macquarie Fields community, this section turns to the findings concerning police education. The explanatory framework of Diagram 1 (p.184) provides an illustration which summarises this study’s findings concerning the ongoing factors that contribute to the problematic police-community relationship at Macquarie Fields. These include; police notions of accountability and community partnership; police-community relations; the use of certain crime reduction strategies such as ‘moving on’ youths socialising in public spaces; the negative impact of young inexperienced police upon police-community relations and the failed attempts of police management to increase accountability and form closer partnerships with the
community. It is suggested that deficiencies in police training significantly contribute to the perpetuation of these factors. This section will first present findings concerning the reflections of police participants on the ‘initial shock’ they received upon commencement of their policing duties at Macquarie Fields. In addition, this section will focus upon views articulated by community service participants regarding different training strategies for street police as a possible remedy for the poor police-community relations at Macquarie Fields:

**Initial shock**

During the course of interviews, many police participants reflected upon their initial reactions of shock when they first commenced duties at Macquarie Fields. For instance, Abby’s first station was Macquarie Fields, and she vividly recalled her initial reaction to observing residents walking the streets during the early hours of the morning:

> When I started here, it really shocked me that you would see people walking to the servo at 2:00 AM to buy a packet of smokes. I just couldn’t believe that that is how some people live.

Jack another participant, who, like Abby, commenced duties at Macquarie Fields directly following police recruit training, spoke of his shock concerning the way in which he and his colleagues were spoken to by members of the public:

> I don’t know whether it’s because I’m older that I see it more now, but I would never, like, I would never, never, have spoken to police like the way I’m spoken to regularly. It’s stunned me when I first came to this station. If there was an offense for just being a straight out rude dick head you would be dishing it out all the time. (Jack)
Mike, like Abby and Jack, commenced duties as a police officer at Macquarie Fields directly following completion of recruit training. Although himself from a Department of Housing background, he vividly recalled the initial shock he felt:

_I’m from a Housing Commission family, but in a small country town. We came here and they told us it was a big Housing Commission population, and I said, “No worries”. When I first got here on my induction day, there was a mini bus and they took us out for a tour at Macquarie Fields. I thought I was going to the zoo, going to housing estates where they don’t have streets, where they have got dirt roads, kids running around in nappies, in singlets, six kids to a house with one mum. I couldn’t believe it. You see it on TV. It was like you were looking at a world vision, ‘Sponsor a kid’ a. It was pretty terrible. If it was up to me, I would be taking kids off of every second place I went to. It is a bit of an eye opener._

Probably most surprising were the comments of Bonnie, an experienced officer of some six years, who was transferred to Macquarie Fields in her third year of service from a busy Sydney suburban station:

_It was a culture shock to me coming here from Burwood. The population there is predominantly Asian and we also had a Lebanese community. But, even then, when we would move them on at Westfields, they wouldn’t touch you, they wouldn’t yell abuse at you. I came over here and it was a culture shock, because I had fourteen to fifteen year olds trying to push me, trying to hit me. They wouldn’t listen, they would start yelling abuse and swearing and I thought, ‘What have I walked into’. I had more physical altercations here in the first six months than what I would have had during two and a half years at_
Burwood. It was a big shock for me that boys and girls would come up and push you, or grab hold of your arms, in some way physically touch you or push you, and this was after the riots. I still remember thinking, ‘What have I come to’. We were dealing with pockets of youth. A lot of it was youth related. I would also say there is not a lot of respect now from the youth. I don’t feel that they are respectful.

These accounts revolve around their initial shock concerning community members’ lifestyles; the disrespectful way in which police are spoken to by some community members and the frequency of physical altercations with local youth. These accounts would tend to suggest that police are not adequately prepared to face the unique challenges posed in policing a disadvantaged community such as Macquarie Fields. In addition, it would appear that the policing environment at Macquarie Fields fails to reinforce the professional and ethical values taught to the new police during their recruit training.

The following section discusses this study’s findings regarding community service provider respondents’ suggestions concerning possible solutions to poor-police community relations at Macquarie Fields. It is suggested that these ideas, which centre on police education initiatives, may contribute a possible solution to the problematic issues of initial shock felt by police commencing duties at Macquarie Fields, their constant negative interactions with community members and negative attitudes and perceptions of difference towards community members.
**Police training to assist police interact effectively with youth**

Community service providers considered that changes to police ideologies and training were possible solutions to help improve police-community relations. Some community service providers, for example, spoke of the problems associated with police attempting to interact and deal with youth from a strictly legal perspective. They considered that, in adopting this legalistic approach, police fail to take into account the underlying factors that contribute to certain young persons’ offending behaviour, which in turn can further exacerbate the poor police-youth interaction:

*It's all about perspectives and ideologies as well. I know that, when the police are in the community their function is to think more of a legal perspective, we are there to get the criminals off the street and that’s our main job to do. How they do that can be detrimental to the person being taken off the street, because it doesn’t matter how you get them off the street they're off the street. So, sometimes, the end justifies the means in regards to, “Oh well, they're just offenders, get them off the street anyway we can, you know roughing them up to get them off the street, so we can arrest them and move them on from there”, because, at the end of the day that’s their job. That’s the sort of stuff we’re dealing with. How to change that would be for them to understand that there are significant issues that have led to that young person being in that situation where they are offending. It sounds very bleeding heart, but that’s the reality of them understanding those anti social behaviours, deconstructing the barriers or people’s perceptions as to why those behaviours occur in the first place, and it's because of all those social psycho issues, not having the care, going through a lot of neglect, never having positive reinforcement in their lives, when officers deal with these young people, the young people don’t have the capacity to deal*
effectively with, or communicate effectively with, the police, which causes more problems. A lot of young people I have worked with have received additional charges for resist arrest and assault police, and the charges get added on as a result of dealing with police, and that is just furthering the cycle of offending, as a result of them not dealing appropriately with police and vice versa.

(Robert)

Community service provider participants were of the view that general duties police should be provided with similar training to that afforded to Youth Liaison Officers. Sue, who has been representing local youth in the criminal justice system, commented:

Perhaps there are a lot of areas in police training that need to be addressed. I think a lot of situations could be avoided with perhaps more appropriate youth training. I’ve had good reports back from young people about the Youth Liaison Officers, how they were fine, how they were supportive, so maybe some training should be given to the general duties police. The young people don’t complain about the Youth Liaison Officers.

Community service participant Andrew expressed the view that there needed to be a more positive interaction between police and youth. He suggested that police needed to be taught skills in their interactions with youths, similar to those provided to teachers. In particular, police should be taught how to avoid placing youths in confrontational situations in front of their peers. Furthermore, Andrew identified that these aforementioned communication skills are particularly required by younger inexperienced police:
I don’t think they’re taught how to interact with young people or understand the effects and kickbacks of body language, tone of voice, cognitive entry points to a conversation. You know, setting up a confrontational situation just within the first three or four words and the way they are holding themselves, and the boys, especially, respond in kind. So, as soon as they meet on the face to face situation, the police officers already have in their mind that this is going to be a conflictual situation. They set themselves up in a situation where it is going to be a conflict from the start. So, from there, they go, “I am a police officer therefore I demand respect, you better follow it up, otherwise I will strong arm it”. Teachers in the classroom know this that you don’t put young people in a confrontational situation, where you either back down or follow it through with some sort of consequences. If the police put the young person down in front of their peers, the young person’s response is already pre-determined. The young person knows what they have to do to maintain their dignity or their standing. So, those sorts of things, you don’t even have to be in the proximity, you can see it from a distance, the police officer walking towards the young people, and already the kids are shuffling, getting ready to face whatever is going to come, they know what they’re going to say, the police are puffing out and getting ready to march in and deliver the order, so it’s all predetermined. Mostly it is the younger police acting this way. The older ones know the story a bit better and know the situation.

The chink in the process are the junior constables and how they deal with the community. This is the problem which needs to be addressed. The problem with the police, and the way that they train, is the way they allow other people to partake in the influence of their young officers and they are pretty closed off
with that. Once they come out of the New South Wales Police Academy at Goulburn, that should be it, they should be rounded off, they shouldn’t need further community engagement enhancement stuff, where this is exactly what they need. They need to be trained how to better interact with people and operate with people and engage with people. Your crime rates are one thing about enforcing law structures, but the other thing is ensuring a productive community as well. I mean, knowing that the community is comfortable with the police, knowing that they can interact the police, and, to the police, this is wishy washy, hippy stuff. Classic comments that really mess up kids and set up a negative concept of police is when they turn around and say, “How old are you? Twelve, well you know in a year’s time you will be old enough to go to Juvie”. It’s so dumb, because you just think you have just made life that harder for yourself and your fellow officers in three to four years time.

In addition to the views of community service providers concerning the inadequacies of police training, other forms of police training may be detrimental to police-community relations at Macquarie Fields. For instance, police manager Steve expressed concern regarding police use of an approved defensive tactic taught to police. Steve spoke of the problems associated with the use of the ‘check drill’ procedure. This consists of a police officer pushing an individual in the chest when they approach too close to the officer. In addition, police are also taught to deliver strikes which consist of kneeing an offender’s thigh when they are resisting police. Steve considered that these can be perceived by the public as being aggressive acts and can create unfavourable opinions about police.
There is something that I’m not totally comfortable with. There is an approach by police to situations and how they deal with them, and what they’re taught, and all of that. We go to a situation now and it’s some sort of domestic. You and I walk in the door. We go and talk to mum and dad, and dad gets a bit aggro and gets in the face of the copper is not committing any offence. Years ago, I might have stepped back and talked to him, and all that sort of stuff. With these days, they are taught to do a number of different tactics and they are aggressive tactics, and I don’t know whether I agree with it. It is done in the public, say in the street, they might be talking to a young bloke and he is in their face. They might do a couple of things. One, they might do a check drill. All is that they stand there, and they go bang. They push the person in the chest, knock them over. Cops will do that. That is part of their training to do that and they’ll put in their statement that they’ve done a certified and approved check drill. Now, what does that person who has been checked drilled think straight away? They think they have just been assaulted, or the cop’s aggressive. They also get the bloke and wrestle him on the ground, and then knee him four or five times in the thigh with what they call the strikes. Again, what we tell them to do and, from my perspective, this makes for a lot of complaints and that doesn’t help the perception of what the cops are. The perception straightaway is the thing that kills us.

These views of police manager Steve raises an issue which suggests that training delivered to and subsequently used by police consists of a ‘one size fits all’ model which fails to take into account the dynamics of police-community relationships which can vary throughout different patrols.
Summary

This chapter has reported this study’s findings that there are a number of underlying factors which explain the police-community relationship at Macquarie Fields. In terms of the problematic police-community relations, poor police attitudes towards accountability, community partnership and aggressive interactions with local youth, this study found that these factors have been adversely influenced by negative police attitudes towards the local community.

Interviews conducted with police participants revealed a number of themes in which respondents articulated their attitudes towards the local community. These included: ‘appreciation’; ‘frustration’; ‘respect’; ‘belonging to the community’; ‘opinions regarding victims of crime’ and ‘views of suspects’. Most police participants upon reflection of their interactions with community members articulated the view that they didn’t feel appreciated and considered they were being used by residents to satisfy their own agendas. Police participants also felt frustrated and not respected. In addition, police participants were divided as to whether they felt they belonged to the local community. Furthermore, most police respondents considered that not all victims of crime with whom they had contact were equally deserving of police attention and that their opinions of suspects were determined by the level of respect given to police by the individual.

Although most police participants expressed poor opinions concerning the community members with whom they interacted, observations conducted of police on patrol revealed professional conduct. However, interviews with police respondents revealed that the motivation for professional conduct was due sometimes to these respondents
wishing to avoid disciplinary action rather than possessing a desire to better serve the community.

This study also found that there were a number of factors associated with the policing role at Macquarie Fields which adversely influenced police attitudes towards community members. All police respondents identified that their contact with the Macquarie Fields community consisted of them interacting with a small percentage of Department of Housing residents who are predominantly youths. In addition, police participants indicated that they are subjected to verbal and sometimes physical abuse during their interactions with these youth. These accounts of police being subjected to verbal abuse were corroborated through the accounts of community service respondents and field observations. Furthermore, police indicated that their only contact with community members other than those described, is when they are victims of crime. In terms of the policing role at Macquarie Fields, police participants reported that their constant negative interactions with a small percentage of community members has led to the negative stereotyping of other community members by police. This poor relationship between police and community members also appears to be exacerbated by the removal of a full time Police Youth Liaison Officer at Macquarie Fields.

In addition to these constant adverse police interactions with youth and subsequent negative stereotyping of the Macquarie Fields community, this study found that police respondents perceived significant differences between themselves and the residents with whom they come in contact. These perceived differences were identified in terms of: ‘ambition’; ‘care of children’; ‘morals and values’; ‘drug usage’; ‘education’;
‘employment’; ‘hygiene’; ‘motivation’; and ‘respect for authority and family’. It is contended that constant negative interactions with certain community members combined with these perceptions of significant difference has impacted adversely upon Macquarie Fields police attitudes towards their local community. In turn, these negative attitudes and perceptions of difference have adversely impacted upon police notions and practices of accountability, community partnership, and the manner in which police, especially younger, inexperienced officers search and move on groups of youths socialising in public spaces. All these factors have subsequently contributed to the poor police-community relationship at Macquarie Fields.

In addition, this study found evidence which suggests the need for improved police training in order to better equip officers in dealing more effectively with the unique policing problems posed by disadvantaged communities such as Macquarie Fields. For instance, police participants reflected upon the initial shock they experienced upon the commencement of policing duties at Macquarie Fields. This shock reaction stemmed from initial exposure to the lifestyle of the community members and the level of disrespect directed towards police, particularly from local youth. This would appear to indicate possible inadequacies of police training in effectively preparing officers to work in disadvantaged communities such as Macquarie Fields.

This study also found there appears to be inadequacies in police training to assist police interact more effectively with youth. For instance, some community service provider participants suggested that police appear to deal with youth from a purely legalistic perspective and that this fails to take into account the underlying social factors which in some cases influence the behaviour of youth. Furthermore, some community service
provider respondents identified that younger, inexperienced officers appear to experience difficulties in communicating effectively with youths which can lead to confrontational encounters. These respondents suggested that police, and in particular, younger officers need to be taught how to interact more effectively with young people.

Finally, evidence also suggests that police training consists of a ‘one size fits all’ model where unique characteristics such as problematic police-community relations occurring within the disadvantaged community such as Macquarie Fields are not taken into account. A case in point is the police defensive tactic of ‘check drill’ in which an officer pushes an individual in the chest if they approach too close. The use of this defensive tactic in Macquarie Fields may contribute to the ongoing problematic relations between police and community members. Residents who are the recipients of this defensive tactic or witness this occurring upon another individual may misperceive this to be an act of aggression by police and not the approved police defensive tactic.
CHAPTER 8
DISCUSSION

Introduction
This study had two purposes. Firstly, it aimed to develop a deeper understanding of the perceptions of police accountability at the Macquarie Fields patrol, and, secondly, to examine whether community-policing initiatives implemented following the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots have changed police perceptions of accountability to the community and led to improved relations between local police and community members. This chapter discusses the findings in chapters 6 and 7 in relation to this study’s main research question, ‘Have community policing initiatives changed police perceptions of accountability in Macquarie Fields and have they led to better police-community relations?’

This research question has been addressed by focusing upon lesser issues that build towards an answer. These sub-questions consisted of identifying whether adverse police-community relations appeared to have contributed to the 2005 riots; what police perceptions of accountability were at the time of this conflict; what community policing initiatives have been introduced at Macquarie Fields following the riots and their intended impact on local police perceptions of membership in the local community, whether these initiatives have changed police perceptions of accountability and police-community relations; and, if they have, the extent to which people attribute these changes to community policing initiatives.
The following discussion is comprised of two sections. The first discusses, in the light of the theoretical literature, expectations and surprises arising from this study. The second section, similarly taking into account the theoretical literature, discusses the findings pertaining to the underlying factors that explain the relationship between Macquarie Fields police and the local community.

**Expectations concerning the relationship between Macquarie Fields police and the local community**

*Police managements’ attempts*

My initial expectation was that senior police management at Macquarie Fields would be implementing strategies in an attempt to improve relations and forge closer partnerships with the local community. My expectation of these initiatives was based upon the organisational requirements of the NSWP in terms of its key performance areas and the roles and responsibilities of police management. The NSWP Corporate Plan 2008-2012 outlined that, regarding its service to the community and partner agencies, it aimed to achieve, “Increased community confidence in police” (p.2). This objective was to be facilitated, in part, through providing professional customer service and collaboration with the community and partner agencies.

Regarding management and leadership, the NSWP Corporate Plan indicated that, “…clear direction and support” (p.2) was required from managers. This was to be made possible partly through managers influencing staff to achieve, “…community, government and corporate priorities” (p.2). An indicator of the success of this key
performance area included, “Increase the % of the community who are satisfied with services provided by the police” (NSWP, 2008, p.2).

The performance of Local Area Command management such as that at Macquarie Fields in meeting the organisational objectives, as outlined in the NSWP Corporate Plan, are subject to a Command Performance Accountability System (COMPASS). The COMPASS process consists of a forum in which the senior managers of Commands being assessed appear before the Commissioner’s Executive Team. In addition, Australian literature which addresses the role of police management comments that, “…managers and leaders share a goal of achieving the objectives of the organisation” (Mitchell & Casey, 2007, p.8), in this case at Macquarie Fields; community collaboration and an increase in community satisfaction with the services provided by police.

Another source of my expectations concerning the implementation of strategies to improve relations and forge closer partnerships was based in the findings of the New South Wales Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues which examined the contributing factors to the Macquarie Fields riots. This Parliamentary Committee (2006) reported evidence deposed by senior police management at Macquarie Fields about community-policing initiatives since the 2005 riots. These included police working with local government and non government service providers to assist diverting ‘at risk’ youth away from the criminal justice system and police organising and participating in camps in an attempt to understand the issues impacting adversely upon young offenders and provide subsequent assistance. In addition, senior police managers reported around this time that greater police involvement in
community social gatherings such as visiting school fetes and interacting with the community had been initiated (Totaro, 2006).

**This expectation was established.** Interviews conducted with senior police managers, street police and community service respondents at Macquarie Fields confirmed these expectations. In regards to the commitment to improve accountability to the local community, senior police manager Bob spoke of the implementation of a customer service approach at Macquarie Fields designed to improve accountability and service towards victims of crime. This consisted of victims of crime being informed by police when the offender to their crime is arrested. In addition, the victim is informed of the outcome of the court matter concerning the offender. However, as highlighted by Bob, there were challenges for management in encouraging street police to embrace and practice customer service approaches.

In terms of attempts to improve police-community relations, the comments of Arthur, a general duties constable attached to Macquarie Fields for three years, added support to these efforts. Arthur provided the example of an initiative implemented by police management in an attempt to improve relations between Macquarie Fields police and local youth. He described a police-youth camp which brought police and troubled youth together in an informal, fun setting as ‘awesome’ and a worthwhile initiative which improved the relationship between police and youth. Police management at Macquarie Fields also made attempts to forge closer partnerships with residents and community service providers through active involvement in multi-agency committees which comprised of community representatives and government/non-government service providers. Some community service provider participants such as Billy recalled
that following the 2005 riots new police management arrived at Macquarie Fields with
an attitude of genuinely desiring to engage with and build a better local community.
However, as highlighted by Bob, a police manager, there were difficulties in allocating
police staff to attend these meetings.

In addition, there were concerns amongst some respondents concerning the
effectiveness of these community meetings. Police participant Bonnie for instance,
considered that these meetings were not adequately represented by the local younger
adults. Furthermore, community service respondent Andrew mentioned that as the
NSWP is a bureaucratic organisation it is difficult for them to act upon community
feedback arising from these meetings.

The Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006) made the recommendation that police
were to continue strengthening relationships with local youth and government/non
government organisations serving the Macquarie Fields community. All of these were
mentioned by participants in the study. In terms of community service participants for
instance, Gina acknowledged that police management at Macquarie Fields strived to
enhance relationships between police, service providers and the local community.
Albert commented that police management appeared to want to engage with the
community, whilst Neridah considered that the dialogue had improved between police
management and the community. It is noted though, that whilst police management
provided examples of youth camps such as ‘Camp Impact’ to bring local youth and
police together, Steve’s comment concerning the referral of ‘at risk’ youth by police to
the local Police Citizens Youth Club was the only example provided concerning the
diversion of youth ‘at risk’. Also, the question remains as to whether police attempts to engage in these aforementioned activities inevitably lead to positive outcomes.

**The continuation of poor relations between police and community at Macquarie Fields**

Another expectation I possessed was the continued existence of poor relations at Macquarie Fields between street police and local community members. My expectation of continuing community dissatisfaction occurring at Macquarie Fields was formed through a number of sources: newspaper articles involving interviews with local residents; theoretical literature which addressed the contributing factors of the Macquarie Fields riots; and theoretical literature addressing the impact of socially disorganised communities upon residents’ attitudes towards police. Media interviews conducted with community members and youth workers published following the 2005 riots revealed ongoing community discontent with the actions and inactions of local police (Totoro, 2006). A further report also indicated that many local youth, although not having participated in the 2005 riots, disliked police (Yamine & Watson, 2006). These media reports had also identified public dissatisfaction at perceived police overreaction concerning some matters and inaction in other matters, involving complaints from the public and requests for assistance. These themes of community dissatisfaction were also identified by researchers such as Lee (2006) who reported upon the findings of a study he conducted at Macquarie Fields during 2002-2003.

In addition, research conducted by Weatherburn (2006) concerning the causes of the 2005 riots, drew upon the findings of Lee (2006) and newspaper articles published
following the riots which cited community discontent regarding police inaction and mistreatment of local youths. Weatherburn (2006) suggested that a build up of community anger towards police combined with a “flashpoint for the discharge of this anger” (Weatherburn, 2006, p.23) which, in the case of Macquarie Fields, was the death of the two youths following a police chase. These were the precipitating factors leading to the riots.

Another source of my expectation concerning ongoing local community discontent with Macquarie Fields police was formed through the literature on socially disorganised communities, and residents’ attitudes towards police. This literature suggests that communities such as Macquarie Fields, which suffer from neighbourhood disorder (Cao, Frank & Cullen, 1996) perceived neighbourhood disorder (Brown & Benedict, 2002) or concentrated disadvantage (consisting of high levels of unemployment and poverty) (Reisig & Parks, 2000; Sampson & Bartusch, 1998; Sprott & Doob, 2009; Xu et al., 2005) exhibit dissatisfaction towards police. Others suggest that residents from lower socio-economic groups express less satisfaction with police (Albrecht & Green, 1997; Home Office, 2004; Huang & Vaughn, 1996; Sampson & Bartusch, 1998).

Research also indicates that socially disadvantaged communities such as Macquarie Fields can have an adverse influence upon police practices (Sorensen et al., 1993, Smith, 1986; Terrill & Reisig, 2003). Researchers such as Klinger (1997) and Stark (1987) found that police were less responsive in attending to complaints of non-violent minor crime in low status neighbourhoods. In addition, individuals living in socially disorganised communities report experiencing greater police disrespect (Mastrofski et
al., 2002). Furthermore, research conducted by Herbert (1997) and Stark (1987) found that run down properties and the presence of graffiti can influence police perceptions of increased deviance amongst residents.

Interviews conducted with government/ non government participants and respondents from Macquarie Fields police confirmed the expectation of poor relations between police and community members. Almost all community service providers touched upon community dissatisfaction regarding the conduct and attitudes of Macquarie Fields police.

It was commonly mentioned that community members with whom police interacted possessed a lack of ‘regard’ for, ‘respect’ for, and ‘trust’ in police. In addition, various community service respondents provided accounts of poor interactions they had witnessed occurring between police and community members. Tim, for example, reflected upon an incident in which police were searching the local area for a person seen carrying a gun. He observed police approach local residents in an attempt to locate the offender but their requests for assistance were met with refusals and abuse. In addition, some community service participants revealed that the extensive police presence upon the streets at Macquarie Fields was viewed by many local residents as intrusive and not wanted. Furthermore, police participants, such as Bev, acknowledged the existence of community dissatisfaction with police.

In terms of whether there had been an improvement in police-community relations following the 2005 riots, there were diverse views amongst all groups of participants. For example, one police manager considered there had been an improvement whilst
street police considered that relations had improved, but this was based upon the amount of respect displayed by community members towards police. Community service participants provided varied responses to this issue. Lee, for instance, considered there had been a very significant improvement in police-community relations, whilst Rhonda considered that relations had deteriorated.

Findings from this study support the contention of Lee (2006) and Weatherburn (2006) that police inaction and overreaction was a cause of community dissatisfaction at Macquarie Fields. For instance, community service respondent Narelle spoke of community concern regarding a lack of consistency displayed by police in attending to requests of assistance from local residents whilst also observing that many residents found the extensive police presence at Macquarie Fields to be overwhelmingly intrusive.

**Crime reduction strategies implemented by Macquarie Fields police**

Another expectation I possessed was that Macquarie Fields police, in an attempt to drive down the local crime rate and gain community confidence, would be employing certain potentially alienating operational tactics during the course of their daily patrols. These tactics were likely to include ‘stopping, searching and moving on’ at times ‘suspicious’ individuals in high crime locations.

My expectation was based upon a number of sources: submission of the Cabinet Office New South Wales (2005) to the New South Wales Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues; evidence provided by NSWP management to the New
South Wales Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues and the final report of the Standing Committee on Social Issues (2006).

The Cabinet Office New South Wales in its submission to the Standing Committee stated, “Taskings and deployment of General Duty Teams is directed by information provided by the Crime Management Unit” (Submission 19, The Cabinet Office New South Wales, 2005, p.56). The Cabinet Office submission also indicated that the Crime Management Unit “constantly reviews crime trends identifying hotspot crimes and recidivist offenders/victims” (p.58). In terms of the allocation of police and resources at Macquarie fields, the Cabinet Office submission mentioned that, “On a daily basis police and resources are tasked in accordance with current intelligence…Taskings and deployment meetings are held weekly in which future proactive crime taskings are set” (Submission 19, The Cabinet Office New South Wales, 2005, p.58). As well as the Crime Management Unit setting crime reduction work priorities for police at Macquarie Fields, evidence provided to the Standing Committee on Social Issues by the Local Area Commander at the time, Superintendent Wilkins, indicated that upon his appointment at Macquarie Fields he made the ‘reduction of crime’ and ‘community consultation’ as priorities within the Macquarie Fields Patrol. In giving evidence before the Standing Committee he stated that he, “…very much brought the focus of community consultation and pro-active policing to the local area command” (Superintendent Stuart Wilkins, Evidence 13 December 2005, p.13).

In terms of the allocation of police resources at Macquarie Fields, it would appear that the reduction of crime, predominantly consisting of ‘move-ons and searches’, is a main
objective of general duties police. These police are directed to perform these duties at the commencement of their shifts. Prior to the commencement of the shift the Team Leader, sergeant responsible for the performance of the general duties shift team, receives crime ‘hotspot’ information from the patrol’s Intelligence Unit, which forms part of the Crime Management Unit. The sergeant then places this information on the police computer system as a directive requiring general duties police to patrol that area during their shift and to ‘stop, search and move on’ anyone ‘acting suspiciously’ in the vicinity. At the completion of their shift, the general duties police are required to document in their work log, indicating how much time they spent patrolling and noting actions they undertook at the crime ‘hotspot’.

In terms of the allocation of police resources at Macquarie Fields, it would appear that the reduction of crime, predominantly consisting of ‘move-ons and searches’, is a main objective of general duties police. These police are ‘tasked’ to perform these duties during the course of their shifts. As outlined by Superintendent Wilkins during evidence deposed to the Standing Committee on Social Issues, “…we have more police available on a Sunday night than we have on a Monday night, because crime statistics and intelligence tell us that we are far busier at those times than at other times” (Superintendent Stuart Wilkins, Evidence 13 December 2005, p.16).

Other sources of my expectations here were both research and experiential related. In regards to my expectation being formed through the theoretical literature on police practices, Reisig and Parks (2004, p.14) note that in high crime areas that suffer from, “…observable signs of behavioral and physical disorder” it is important for police to take active steps to address those issues. Weatherburn (2006) observed that when communities suffer from a high crime rate, pressure is placed upon local police
management by Operations and Crime Review Panels to come up with strategies to address the problem. The success or otherwise of these strategies are then reviewed during subsequent Crime Review Panel meetings. In terms of the police use of ‘stop, search and move on’ powers, it is often noted that young people due to their socialising in public spaces, often come under police notice (Crime and Misconduct Commission, 2009). Furthermore, police frequently use dispersal powers to move on groups of young people (Gau & Brunson, 2010; Mcara & Mcvie, 2005).

In addition, my expectation was formed through my experience as a former police officer. From 1983 to 2003 I worked as a police officer with the NSWP. For about four of those years I worked in what was known as the Anti Theft Squad. My duties included responding to armed hold ups, and break and enter offences, as they were occurring. Another significant duty was the mapping of crime ‘hot spots’. This was achieved through reviewing crime reports submitted by police following the reporting of a crime. We would subsequently patrol those high crime areas and stop and search anyone considered to be acting in a suspicious manner.

*My expectation concerning Macquarie Fields Police using certain operational tactics to reduce crime was confirmed.* Macquarie Fields police employed two main strategies in the attempt to drive down the local crime rate. These were firstly the targeting of known offenders and secondly the ‘stopping, searching and moving on’ of individuals and groups found ‘loitering’ within high crime areas. Police manager Steve described the extent of the stopping, searching and moving on strategy, saying that, within a twenty four hour period, street police had searched fifteen people and moved on six within a particular high crime area in Macquarie Fields. Furthermore, he predicted that,
within a one month period, street police would have searched ‘two hundred and sixty people’ and moved on ‘around one hundred and fifty’.
Surprises concerning the relationship between Macquarie Fields police and the local community

Diagram 2: *Factors adversely impacting upon the police-community relationship at Macquarie Fields*

Diagram 2 provides a summary of this study’s finding that the poor relationship between Macquarie fields Police and their local community can be attributed to

(i) Inadequacy of police education in preparing police for working in the socially disadvantaged communities of Macquarie Fields.

(ii) Inadequacy of police education in training new police to deal effectively with Macquarie Fields youth.
negative police attitudes towards the Macquarie Fields community and vice-versa. Furthermore these negative attitudes of police appear to be adversely influenced by their constant poor interactions with a small percentage of community members and police perceptions of difference between themselves and community members with whom they come in contact or vice-versa. It also maps the problems in terms of the contribution of recruit education, and the extent to which it prepares novices for the complexities of their role. Findings suggest that deficiencies in police training exacerbate the relationship problem, and that this is a one-way relationship.

**Accountability initiatives implemented by police management not impacting upon attitudes of street police**

Interviews with Macquarie Fields Police management provided evidence of attempts to implement strategies to increase accountability to the local community. For instance, police manager Bob spoke of police participation in community meetings involving government/non-government service providers and local residents. This was supported by Billy, a community service provider who spoke positively of police participation in these meetings. Furthermore, Bob and Steve, a police manager, spoke of the implementation of a customer service approach towards victims. Despite the attempts by police management there has been a failure of these strategies to impact upon attitudes and practices of street police. Even though Macquarie Fields police articulated a strong sense of accountability towards their local management and the organisation, most failed to embrace management’s strategy of accountability to the local community. For instance, whilst a few police participants such as Nigel considered themselves accountable to the local community, the majority did not consider this was
the case. These participants such as Naomi and Jenny articulated the view that their accountability was to their supervisors and the police organisation but not the local community. These views were somewhat reflected in the comments of police manager Steve who acknowledged the challenges for police management to have police more accountable to the local community.

In regards to whether there has been an improvement in police accountability at Macquarie Fields following the 2005 riots, many community service respondents expressed the view that this had not occurred. Police participants however were divided on this issue: whilst police management considered there had been an improvement, police participants (such as Jenny and Bree), believed there had not been a change. This study found that although Macquarie Fields police management implemented community policing initiatives to increase accountability to the local community this did not transfer to the attitudes and day-to-day practices of street police.

Community partnership initiatives and their impact upon attitudes and practices of street police

Similar to the issue of perceptions of accountability held by street police at Macquarie Fields, police-community partnership strategies initiated by police management appear to have failed to translate to the attitudes and day to day practices of street police. This is despite initiatives such as involvement in multi-agency projects to improve facilities within the Macquarie Fields community which included representatives from residents and government/non government agencies.
It is noted, though, that criticisms did exist concerning these partnership initiatives. For instance, police participant Bonnie stated that Macquarie Fields youth failed to attend these meetings and therefore were not represented. In addition, community service respondent Andrew considered that the police organisation failed to take on board and act upon community feedback. Although Macquarie Fields police management encouraged community partnership through input and feedback from residents, this failed to influence the manner in which street police interacted with community members. I had assumed that street police, due to the paramilitary rank structure of the NSWP, would automatically adopt and practice the community policing objectives of police management. However, the literature does touch upon difficulties which can be encountered in having police internalise and practice such initiatives.

For example, research suggests that even though police can, “…understand the principles of COP [Community Oriented Policing], difficulties can arise in implementation and acceptance of administrative changes” (Lord & Friday, 2008, p.236). This would appear to be the case here. For instance, none of the police participants said that a police-community partnership involved police seeking suggestions from local residents concerning crime problems. A typical response was that a police-community partnership consisted of residents providing police intelligence concerning criminal activity. Using this criterion, Martin, for example, considered that a police-community partnership existed at Macquarie Fields. However, police respondent Lydia considered a partnership with the community did not exist due to the reluctance of community members to disclose reports of criminal activity to the police.
This notion of community partnership appeared to manifest itself in the manner in which police interacted with residents, particularly at community meetings. For instance, community service provider Sam spoke of a community lunch in which a local police officer addressed the meeting but then declined to have a meal and interact with the residents. In a similar light, Fiona, another community service respondent, spoke of a monthly community lunch in which a number of local police attended. These police kept to themselves and failed to interact with the residents despite Fiona’s encouragement. Furthermore, the actions of police at these community meetings suggest they were not interested in listening to the concerns and suggestions of residents concerning crime problems.

It would appear that Macquarie Fields police management has failed to ensure that community accountability and partnership initiatives were adopted at the grass-roots level by street police. A contributing factor to this apparent failure was that most community policing initiatives were, in the main, undertaken by selected staff. These staff were drawn from the patrol’s Crime Management Unit as well as Macquarie Fields police managers, and comprised of Duty Officers who held the rank of Inspector and who had overall responsibility of a general duties shift team. General duties street police were mainly directed to concentrate on responding to complaints from victims and to implementing crime reduction strategies.

The role of the Macquarie Field’s Crime Management Unit in the facilitation of community policing initiatives was highlighted by the NSWP in its final report concerning the Macquarie Fields riots. It stated, “The Macquarie Fields Local Area Command has been actively addressing issues pertaining to young people through the
Crime Management Unit” (NSWP, 2005, p.15). In addition, this aspect of the role of the Crime Management Unit was mentioned by Superintendent Wilkins, the Local Area Commander of Macquarie Fields at the time, whilst giving evidence before the Standing Committee on Social Issues. Superintendent Wilkins stated that at the time of his appointment at Macquarie Fields he had, “…very much brought the focus of community consultation and pro-active policing to the Local Area Command” (Superintendent Stuart Wilkins, Evidence 13 December 2005, p. 13). Superintendent Wilkins then proceeded to introduce his ‘team’ as those staff from the patrol’s Crime Management Unit as well as a senior police manager.

Furthermore the Final Report of the Standing Committee on Social Issues provided a further indicator that the Macquarie Fields Crime Management Unit had the predominant role in community policing initiatives. It stated:

…of particular note in the Macquarie Fields LAC are the youth liaison officer and domestic violence liaison officer. These specialist officers comprise part of the crime Management Unit, which takes a whole-of-command approach to such issues, as well as interacting with government and non-government agencies (Standing Committee on Social Issues, 2006, p.42).

In terms of the allocation of resources to meet community policing objectives at Macquarie Fields, this would appear to consist mainly of the deployment of human resources, such as specialist staff including the Youth Liaison and Domestic Violence Officers from the patrol’s Crime Management Unit. It is noted however, that a more comprehensive overview of the allocation of resources at Macquarie fields to meet
community-policing and crime reduction objectives could not be achieved due to financial data being unable to be accessed.

In leaving community policing initiatives predominantly with staff within the Macquarie Fields Crime Management Unit, Macquarie Fields management has somewhat excluded general duties police from taking an active role in community policing initiatives. Although Macquarie Fields police management has adopted the philosophy of community policing and has implemented associated initiatives, the role of the general duties officer has remained confined to that of responding to complaints from members of the public and undertaking crime reduction strategies.

Macquarie Fields is not alone concerning this issue. Authors such as Chappell (2009); Roberg, Kuykendall and Novak (2002) and Vito, Walsh and Kunselman (2005) have recognised problems associated with police departments’ community policing philosophies failing to transfer into the operational practices of street police.

For instance, qualitative research conducted by Chappell (2009) involving interviews and observations of 54 police attached to a Florida Police Department concluded that, “It is clear that the administration has adopted at least the rhetoric of community policing, but again, the results of the present study showed that their beliefs (or rhetoric) have not trickled down to the patrol officers in this sample” (p.23). Participants in this study cited that ‘lack of time’ was the primary reason why they were unable to, “focus on problem solving and meeting community residents” (Chappell, 2009, p.15).
Whereas research conducted by Vito, Walsh and Kunselman (2005) involving the qualitative analysis of narratives submitted by 68 police middle managers revealed that the implementation of community policing initiatives via specialised units within a patrol was perceived by participants as one of the, “…obstacles of the implementation of community policing” (Vito, Walsh & Kunselman, 2005, p.498). In particular, participants cited “lack of communication” (p.498) between specialist officers tasked with community policing and street police as an obstacle.

It is noted though, in more recent times NSWP has made ongoing attempts to improve its accountability and partnership with New South Wales communities including Macquarie fields. For instance, the NSWP Annual Report 2009-2010 highlighted the introduction of the organisation’s customer service initiative. It stated, “We promised through the Customer Service Program, to be accessible to those we serve” (NSW Police Force, 2010, p.4). Also in 2010 the NSWP introduced the Customer Service Charter.

In introducing this Charter, the NSWP Commissioner, Andrew Scipione commented, “Ensuring that we maintain quality customer service is one of the highest priorities of every officer. It is what the community demands, deserves and expects. It is also a key requirement of the NSW Government” (NSW Police Force, 2010, p.1).

The focus of this Charter is to, “…build and enhance relationships and partnerships with our community” (NSW Police Force, 2010, p.1). Customers have been defined as, “victims, witnesses, the community and our internal colleagues” (p.1) with an undertaking given to customers to, “…listen to you and acknowledge your needs; treat
you fairly and with respect; maintain your confidentiality; show care and be accurate; take ownership of your matter if it’s a policing issue” (NSW Police Force, 2010, p.1).

The impact of the ‘stopping, searching and moving on’ crime reduction strategy upon the police-community relationship

Although I expected police at Macquarie Fields would be using ‘stop, search and move on’ powers as a crime reduction strategy, I was surprised to find that this was a significant contributing factor to the reported poor relationship between the police and local community, particularly young people. Two factors were identified as contributing to the negative impact of this strategy. Firstly, as previously mentioned, the extensive police presence upon the streets at Macquarie Fields was reported by some community service providers as being perceived as intrusive by various community members. Secondly, police were reported by many service providers as conducting this strategy in an overzealous and intimidatory manner. Rhonda for instance, who also resided within the Macquarie Fields community, recalled an incident she witnessed involving a number of youths sitting outside her residence harmlessly socialising. Local police arrived, broke up the group by pushing them out of the way and yelled at the youths to move on. Additionally, community service respondent Sam mentioned that most of his clients aged between fifteen to twenty four years have experienced negative encounters with Macquarie Fields police. This consisted of them being ‘treated roughly’ or ‘aggressively’ by police.

It is contended that young people predominantly socialise in public spaces (Nilan, Julian & Germov, 2007) which in turn exposes them to frequent negative contact with
the police. This is consistent with other studies conducted by Crawford (2009); Gao and Brunson (2010) and Sadler (2008) who found that youths socialising in groups, subsequently dispersed by police, perceive harassment, unfair treatment and disrespect. Subsequently, these police practices can have a negative impact upon police-community relations (Arter, 2006).

The ‘stop, search and move on’ procedures applied by Macquarie Fields police to local youth appear to be conducted in an adversarial manner by younger inexperienced police. For example, community service providers Andrew and Neridah identified the majority of negative interactions between police and local youth involved younger police whilst community service provider, Wendy attributed these negative interactions emanating from a ‘power’ attitude held by younger inexperienced officers. This appears to be a causative factor in the reported poor police-community relations. These results support the views of researchers, such as Sadler (2008) who found that police breaking up and dispersing youths socialising in groups detrimentally impacted upon already pre-existing problematic police-youth relationships. Hinds (2007) too, considered that such police practices diminished youths’ respect for police, which leads to youths interacting with police in a hostile and uncooperative manner in future police encounters (Crawford, 2009; Gau & Brunson, 2010).

The adversarial manner in which young inexperienced police conduct ‘move on’ directives upon Macquarie Fields youth has negatively impacted upon local youths’ notions of procedural justice, which, in turn, has negatively affected police legitimacy at Macquarie Fields. Procedural justice has been defined by Murphy et al., (2008) as, “...the perceived fairness of the procedures involved in decision making and
implementation and the treatment people receive from authority” (Murphy et al., 2008, p.139). Research conducted by Hinds (2007) and Murphy et al., (2008) found that a relationship existed between police use of procedural justice during police-citizen encounters and police legitimacy within a community. In turn, the legitimacy of police within a community impacts positively upon an individual’s willingness to co-operate and assist police.

As previously highlighted in this study, police participants and community service respondents provided accounts of residents’ unwillingness to assist police in their law enforcement functions. This finding is consistent with research conducted by Gao and Brunson (2010) which found a causal relationship between police use of dispersal powers and negative notions held by individual’s subjected to such powers in terms of procedural justice and subsequent views of police legitimacy.

In addition to the negative impact upon community relations caused by police ‘moving on’ youths socialising in public places, it is also contended that this practice can be detrimental to the young people themselves. Furthermore, as previously highlighted, findings emanating from this study suggests that police lack of accountability and partnership to the community manifests itself in Macquarie Fields police adopting an adversarial approach during ‘move on’ procedures conducted predominantly upon young people. As highlighted by Nilan et al., (2007) young people use public space such as, “…urban shopping malls and areas surrounding them” (p.53) for socialising and as indicated by Farrell (2009) and Walsh and Taylor (2007) young people constantly ‘moved on’ by police can develop feelings of social exclusion. Furthermore, as described by Mcara and McVie (2005) youths being constantly stopped and moved
on by police can become part of a “permanent suspect population” which can contribute to further “serious forms of contact” (Mcara & McVie, 2005, p.26) as police tend to criminalise those young people. This leads them to be the subject of greater police attention.

In terms of young people socialising in groups in public spaces, this study found that many community service participants were of the view that this activity should be viewed by Macquarie Fields police as an acceptable form of behaviour, which, in most cases, should not be interfered with by the imposition of ‘move on’ directions. It would appear that community workers see the use of public space by young people as legitimate (Debbie, for example) and as a form of self-protection (Narelle). They are not alone. Crawford (2009) for example, argues that it is important for youths to be allowed to socialise in public places in order to develop socially. Furthermore, this provides the youths with a, “…sense of identity and control, as well as providing space in which to forge their independent capacity to manage risk and danger” (Crawford, 2009, p.22).

Community views concerning the Macquarie Fields police have been negatively shaped by the behaviour and attitudes displayed by police during interactions. This finding supports the international literature identifying that the community support afforded to police is influenced by the behaviour and attitudes of police (Reisig, 2000; Weitzer, 2000; Weitzer & Tuch, 2002). For instance, community service participant Narelle reported that due to the lack of consistency in which police attended to matters, residents ‘have lost all that trust in the police’. This was known to police too. Police
participant Bev spoke of her interactions with some community members in which individual’s have expressed their dissatisfaction with previous encounters with police.

In terms of an individual’s approval of police, Jefferson (1991) found that a relationship existed between a respondent’s disapproval of police and perceptions of police misconduct and disrespect. Taking into account the poor relationship between Macquarie Fields police and the community members with whom they come in contact, the comments of community service provider Billy add support to Jefferson’s view. Billy mentioned his perception that police considered community members as ‘ratbags’ and their duty was to keep residents ‘in line’ and not to take ‘any crap from them’. Weitzer and Tuch (2002) argue that an individual’s negative experience with police can adversely impact upon their attitudes towards police. Community service respondent Andy commented that residents resented being stopped and spoken to by police for no apparent reason. Furthermore, community service participants Andrew and Wendy both provided eyewitness accounts of police behaving inappropriately/disrespectfully with community members.

Worryingly, Lynch and Patterson (1991) argue that public support is essential for community policing, and police can lose that support if they are disinterested or not fulfilling their policing role (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003) or if, “…citizens hold unfavourable views of police” (Lynch & Patterson, 1991, p.24). Evidence exists in this present study which supports these aforementioned views. For instance, Tim, a community service participant reported that community members possessed ‘pretty negative attitudes’ towards the Macquarie Fields police. This would appear to be
manifested in the refusal of residents to assist police in locating the whereabouts of an individual armed with a gun, wandering the streets, as reported by Tim.

It is noted though that tensions can exist at Macquarie Fields between competing police objectives, such as crime reduction and community partnership, similar to other patrols which suffer from high crime rates. For instance the 2008-2012 Corporate Plan of the NSWP states that a key performance area is, “Reduced rates of crime, particularly violent crime” (p.2) and the reduction of such was to be achieved through targeting, “repeat offenders and crime hotspots” (p.2). In addition, the NSWP Corporate Plan (2008-2012) indicates that ‘public safety’ is to be addressed through a reduction in, “levels of antisocial behaviour” (p.2) and this was to be achieved in part through the, “Increase and improve coordination of visible authority”(p.2). At Macquarie Fields these tactics are undertaken in conjunction with ‘stop, search and move on’ procedures upon community members. Conversely, the NSWP Corporate Plan (2008-2012) also stipulates that police were to increase the satisfaction of community members concerning police-community interactions (NSWP, 2008, p.2). This tension between competing policing objectives, such as crime reduction and community partnership, has been noted by authors such as Whisenand and Ferguson (2002) who state:

…when the police move in to aggressively attack dangerous street crime, the very neighbourhoods plagued by disorder reject their approach. The citizens are not ready to surrender control of their neighbourhoods to police who show them little respect (Whisenand and Ferguson, 2002, p. 205).

Furthermore, as discussed by Peak, Gaines and Glensor (2010) the police priority of placing emphasis on the “number of activities generated by officers or units” (p.167),
as is the case at Macquarie Fields concerning the use of ‘stop, search and move on’ powers, “…does not equate to evaluating the department’s response to community problems” (p.167).

**Impact of younger inexperienced police upon police-community relations**

Younger inexperienced police were identified by many community service respondents as having the poorest interactions with community members, and, in particular, local youth. This tended to become even more problematic during ‘stop, search and move on’ procedures conducted upon young people. Police management acknowledged this, commenting that some younger inexperienced police adopted a more aggressive approach in their interactions with young people as opposed to discussing issues with them and, this study generated several examples, for instance, searching schoolboys’ bags outside the school gate (Andrew).

Various rationales were put forward by community service providers regarding the inappropriate behaviour of younger inexperienced police. Some consider such behaviour, which invariably led to negative interactions with local youth, was due to some younger police possessing a sense of superiority. Assuming this may be the case, this type of attitude could prove to be problematic in terms of police-community interactions. Younger inexperienced officers possessing a heightened sense of superiority may experience difficulties in dealing with disrespect. The issue of disrespect, and its impact upon less experienced police, has been discussed by Harris (2009) and McElvain and Kposowa (2004) who consider that less experienced police do not cope as well as experienced officers when faced with perceived disrespect from
community members, and, they may subsequently respond in a more aggressive manner to the situation.

Other community service participants considered, however, that the aggressive behaviour displayed by some of the younger inexperienced police was due to their closeness in age to the youth and a subsequent ‘sense of fear’ of being unable to maintain control of the interaction. This would appear to be consistent with research conducted by McElvain and Kposowa (2004), who found that less experienced officers may overreact in citizen encounters, in comparison to experienced police, due to a sense of fear concerning their safety. Community service respondent, Andy, considered that younger police, when involved in interactions with groups of local youths, sometimes behaved in a defensive manner that could be misinterpreted by the youths as being confrontational. This rationale may have some merit, in light of research undertaken by McElvain and Kposowa (2004) who argue that younger inexperienced police, “…may not have developed the skill to tactfully handle situations like more experienced officers would” (McElvain & Kposowa, 2004, p.276).

Observations conducted during this study did reveal instances of young inexperienced police experiencing difficulties during their interactions with local youth. For instance, Nigel, an officer between 20-30 years of age, was observed, whilst on patrol, speaking to a local youth in an unfriendly, officious manner, appearing uncomfortable interacting with the youth. Although the presence of the researcher may have had some influence on the way in which Nigel behaved, in an interview conducted with Nigel, he indicated that he found dealing with local youth the ‘most challenging’ part of his job, and this was due to their level of disrespect. During an observation of a
female officer, aged between 20-30 years, she was clearly uncomfortable when faced with a taunting comment from a school-boy aged around thirteen years. Although police management at Macquarie Fields strived to improve relations between police and local youth, through the implementation of initiatives such as police-youth camps, relations seem to have remained problematic between young inexperienced police and local youth. This study has revealed several critical problem areas in police community interactions, centering around accountability, partnerships, crime reduction initiatives (particularly concerning young people), and the actions of less experienced police. The following discussion examines this study’s findings concerning the underlying factors which explain this poor police-community relationship.

Underlying factors contributing to the problematic relationship

There are a number of factors which have been identified as probably contributing to the previously highlighted unsatisfactory relationship between the Macquarie Fields police and their local community. These factors are: the adverse impact of a problematic work environment; negative attitudes held by street police towards the local community; and police perceptions of difference between themselves and the community members with whom they come in contact. In this section, I discuss these factors in light of what appears to be a cycle of rejection and disrespect towards police from parts of the local community that ends up negatively affecting the police-community relationship at Macquarie Fields.
Diagram 3: The impact of cycles of rejection and disrespect upon the attitudes of local street police.

The above diagram provides a summary of the finding that negative police attitudes towards the Macquarie Fields community were adversely influenced by a problematic police work environment and subsequent negative stereotyping. In terms of workload, Macquarie Fields police reported constantly interacting with a small percentage of residents which consisted of youths residing within the Department of Housing estates. Whilst most of the Macquarie Fields community consisted of ‘good people’, ten per cent of the community took up ninety percent of the police workload (Steve). Police
reported being subjected to abuse and disrespect during these interactions and police contact with other residents occurred only if those residents had become a victim and reported a crime.

Almost all police participants provided accounts of problematic interactions with local youth from the Department of Housing estates. Most respondents expressed the view that these local youth showed very low respect towards police, (e.g. Haley) whilst Mike and Reg provided accounts of being subjected to verbal abuse by local youth. Police participants, including Jack, Jenny and Steve, articulated the view that parents played a significant role regarding local youths’ disrespect towards police. This was somewhat supported by Sam, a community service provider, who reported that some Macquarie Fields residents trained their children, some as young as five years, to verbally abuse police. Although Macquarie Fields police were only coming in contact with a small percentage of the local community, namely certain local youths from Department of Housing estates, the adversarial and unpleasant nature of these interactions had deleteriously impacted upon police views, which led to the negative stereotyping of Macquarie Fields community members, (according to police participants, such as Jack and Martin, and supported by Tim, a community service participant).

There was some evidence of Macquarie Fields police management making a commitment to assisting the socially disadvantaged community members of Macquarie Fields. This was achieved through the implementation of such projects as police-youth camps, as well as police participation in multi-agency committees formed to rejuvenate the Macquarie Fields area. However, management has failed to take into account, and act upon, the constant adversarial interactions between police and a small percentage of
the local community. Furthermore, management failed to address the detrimental impact of this work environment upon police attitudes towards the local community. This finding is consistent with the research literature, which identifies the influence of the police work environment upon officers’ attitudes towards their policing role (Lawton, 2007; Lee et al., 2010; Prenzler, 1997; Sun et al., 2008; Terrill & Reisig, 2003; Wortley, 1992).

**Attitudes held by street police towards the local community**

The attitudes of street police towards the local community members with whom they come in contact were predominantly negative. They appeared to have not been improved upon by the initiatives of police management to enhance accountability, police community relations and partnerships at Macquarie Fields. The diagram below provides a summary of the attitudes of street police towards these community members. This included; being unappreciated, disrespected, used and frustrated by community members. In addition, police felt they did not belong to the community that deservedness of victims varied and views of suspects was dependent upon the level of respect shown to police during the interaction.
In terms of police participants feeling appreciated by the local community, most police participants felt that only certain sections of the community appreciated the work they did, with some, such as Reg and Lee, considering that the community did not appreciate the work carried out by police at all. Some police felt they were being used by the community members with whom they came in contact. Police participant,
Ralph, for instance, thought that the majority of requests for help from residents emanated not from a desire to seek police assistance but to use police as a source of revenge against a partner. In addition, police participant, Mike, expressed scepticism at information provided to him by residents, and felt this may have been provided out of motivation to reduce competition amongst local criminals. Frustration was expressed by most police respondents concerning the assistance provided to victims of crime, only to have them show disrespect towards police in subsequent interactions.

No police participants considered themself respected by the local community members with whom they came in contact. Participants provided predominantly two rationales as to why they considered respect from residents was not forthcoming. Jack, for instance, provided the typical response, that a community member’s respect for police was dependent upon their social class, and, if the individual was from a Department of Housing background, then they did not respect police. Whereas other police respondents, such as George, considered there was little respect from the community members with whom police interacted, due to police being perceived as an ‘interference’ to those residents’ daily lives.

Division existed amongst police respondents as to whether they felt part of the Macquarie Fields community. Some respondents expressed the view that they belonged to the Macquarie Fields policing community but not the local community. Many of those participants who articulated this view expressed the belief that their policing role constantly exposed them to negative community contact, which caused them to feel they did not belong. However, some respondents, such as Nigel, did consider they were part of the local community. Nigel thought his regular contact with local residents
made him feel part of the community. Views varied amongst police participants concerning the deservedness of victims of crime at Macquarie Fields. Ian and Arthur for instance, believed that all victims, no matter their background or previous criminal convictions, should be treated in the same manner.

However, the majority of police respondents did not believe that all victims with whom they came in contact were equally deserving of police attention. These respondents, though, provided different rationales in support of their views. Naomi and Ben considered that some victims failed to take active steps to break free from the victim cycle, whereas others expressed the view that some community members claimed they were victims in order to obtain an advantage or seek revenge upon an individual.

Bree considered some individuals were not genuine victims, but, rather, feigned their situation in order to be transferred to another Department of Housing estate. Haley considered the majority of individuals with whom she came in contact were claiming victimisation, in order to seek retribution against another resident. Jack considered that some of the victims he had dealt with had requested assistance from police in order to be granted ‘Apprehended Violence Orders’ and then used these to antagonize and ‘bait’ their partners. All of these views indicate a suspicious stance likely to impact on victim care.

In regard to police participants’ views of suspects, whilst some participants considered suspects should be treated in the same way as other community members, the majority of police expressed the view that the way in which a suspect is treated is dependent upon the level of respect they are given, (Martin said that he didn’t join the Police Force to receive abuse from ‘these sort of people’). Nonetheless, although police
expressed negative attitudes towards the Macquarie Fields community members with whom they came in contact, a high standard of professional conduct was observed on the whole during the observation component of the study.

It is noted, however, that some police participants said that the motivating factor for their professional conduct was not to better serve the Macquarie Fields community, but, rather, avoid complaints and any ensuing disciplinary action. Police participant Haley, for instance, revealed she wasn’t concerned about community views of police performance within the community but was concerned with ensuring she complied with the requirements of police policy and procedure, in part because she felt there was nothing she could do to change their lifestyle situation. Many said that they abided by the ‘Care Principle’ which was an acronym for ‘Cover Arse Retain Employment’. It is possible that police use the ‘Care Principle’ as a protective strategy, to assist them to deal with workload and the stressful community interactions encountered in the problematic work environment in which they are powerless to change the situations they encounter, and the best they can achieve is to look after themselves.

These negative attitudes have probably adversely impacted upon notions of partnership with, and accountability towards, community members. This subsequently manifests itself in poor interactions between police and community members. These findings are consistent with the literature which considers the adverse impact of socially disorganised communities such as Macquarie Fields upon the attitudes of police (e.g. Worden, 1996).

**Perceptions of difference held by police**
This study found that police saw themselves as different from those Macquarie Fields people with whom they interacted. These perceptions of difference, similar to the negative views held by police towards the local community, adversely impacted upon police attitudes pertaining to community accountability and partnership. This, again, contributed to poor interactions occurring between police and community members.

Police perceptions of difference between themselves and the community members with whom they come in contact are summarised in Table 6.

Table 6: Perceptions of difference held by street police regarding community members with whom they come in contact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>Community Members</th>
<th>Police</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambition</td>
<td>Lack ambition</td>
<td>Possess ambition in their careers and personal lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care of Children</td>
<td>Allow young children to run around unsupervised.</td>
<td>Consider proper supervision of young children very important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do not consider having children an important decision</td>
<td>Having children is a very important decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morals and Values</td>
<td>Do not care for their family</td>
<td>Family oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Usage</td>
<td>High usage of cannabis and alcohol</td>
<td>Do not use cannabis, moderate alcohol users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Not educated Low intellect</td>
<td>Possess an education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Are not employed and not motivated to work</td>
<td>Employed and possess a work ethic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hygiene</td>
<td>Low standards of hygiene and cleanliness in regards to their houses and the state of their children</td>
<td>Possess cleanliness and good hygiene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Are not motivated to succeed in their lives</td>
<td>Are motivated to succeed in their lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect for Authority and Family</td>
<td>Do not respect family, police or the law</td>
<td>Have respect for family, police and the law</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Police participants considered there were vast differences between themselves and community members with whom they come in contact, in terms of lifestyle, morality and education. Most police participants considered that these community members lacked ambition, cared inadequately for their children, placed little thought into having babies, were not family oriented, were high users of cannabis and alcohol, did not possess an education, were unemployed, had low standards of hygiene and cleanliness, were not motivated to succeed and did not respect family, police and the law.

These findings regarding police perceptions of difference between themselves and the community members with whom they come in contact suggests that police regard these residents as ‘others’ and this in turn impacts adversely upon the manner in which police interact with individuals. Sayer (2005) describes ‘othering’ as, “…a process in which groups define themselves in opposition to and exclusion of others, by attributing negative properties to them, in contrast to which their own identity is defined as normal and good” (Sayer, 2005, p.58).

In constructing the residents with whom they came in contact as ‘Other’, Macquarie fields police divided themselves and the local community into “‘we’ and ‘they’” categories (Garcia, 2008, p.28) in which the police are ‘we’ and the residents ‘they’. In terms of police perceptions of difference between themselves and those community members with whom they come in contact, the comments of police participant Abby typified the consensus amongst police participants. Abby considered that; ‘The main way which most police live our lives is too different, very different, very different way of life.’ [sic].
It is asserted that the poor attitudes and behaviours of Macquarie Fields police, displayed in their interactions with community members, and as reported by community service respondents, has been shaped not only by the previously highlighted problematic work environment, but also by police perceptions of ‘otherness’ regarding the community members with whom they interact on a daily basis. Sayer (2005) in discussing the impact of ‘otherness’ stated; “In its mildest forms it may merely involve a slight feeling of unease when in the company of others, and may merge into a sense of not belonging rather than hostility towards the other” (Sayer, 2005, p.163).

A lack of social ease was certainly shown by less experienced police at multi-agency gatherings, which can be classed as potentially a mild form of ‘othering’. However, the over-zealous control of young people in public spaces suggest that, even if this is merely an expression of ‘not belonging’, community members may experience their actions as hostile, and feel ‘othered’.

Summary

Interviews conducted with community service participants and police participants attached to the Macquarie Fields patrol revealed a problematic relationship between police and those community members with whom they come in contact. This relationship was characterised by: ongoing poor police community relations; police not considering themselves accountable to the community; police not feeling in partnership with the community; negative interactions occurring between police and local youth during ‘moving on’, and searching procedures and young inexperienced police interacting poorly with community members, particularly local youth. This is occurring
despite efforts of police management to increase accountability, improve relations and forge closer partnerships with the Macquarie Fields community.

A number of factors were identified as causative factors to the aforementioned problematic relationship. These are: the adverse impact of the problematic Macquarie Fields police work environment upon police attitudes; negative attitudes held by street police towards the community members with whom they come in contact and perceptions of difference held by police concerning community members. Furthermore, it would appear that Macquarie Fields management has predominantly left community policing initiatives in the hands of staff from the patrol’s Crime Management Unit and senior management staff with general duties police mainly undertaking crime reduction strategies and responding to calls of assistance from members of the community.

The following chapter, Chapter 9 presents this study’s recommendations. It will be argued that police management needs to recognise the adverse impact of social disadvantage upon police notions of accountability and partnership towards the local community. Also discussed is the need for a shift in focus from crime fighting to one which includes community accountability, partnership, procedural justice, a service oriented approach including problem oriented policing strategies, greater community involvement in reducing crime and community empowerment. Improvements to the induction of police especially younger inexperienced officers into the Macquarie Fields patrol will also be examined.

A number of police training and practical policing strategies will also be canvassed. These include; training to assist police understand the perceived differences in lifestyle,
values and respect between themselves and community members with whom they come in contact, training to assist inexperienced police communicate effectively with youth, police actively seeking feedback from disadvantaged youth concerning policing and crime issues and placement of more experienced police. Also discussed is the need for better in-service training for police involving de-escalation techniques, and conflict management strategies. The additional deployment of police women and the review of the impact of certain police defensive tactics upon the problematic police-community relationship will also be examined.
CHAPTER 9
IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY, PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

Introduction

This chapter discusses this study’s recommendations in terms of implications for policy, practice, and research. Given that results from this study indicate that a problematic relationship existed between police and community members the following discussion focuses upon how the community policing practices at Macquarie Fields can be enhanced and the relationship between police and the local community improved.

Recommendations include the requirement that police management at Macquarie Fields need to recognise the negative impact of the socially disorganised community upon police attitudes. This should be facilitated through the collection of data concerning police perceptions of their role and needs which should be captured through focus groups, surveys, and interviews. Ways to address the ‘crime fighting’ mindset of Macquarie Fields police are also suggested which include: encouragement of a service-oriented approach; placement of more experienced police to work alongside inexperienced officers; greater focus upon problem oriented policing; greater involvement of community in reduction of crime; social skills training for school children and empowerment of the local community through regeneration.
In terms of implications for police training this chapter discusses issues including:

training to assist officers understand perceived lifestyle and social differences; training
to assist inexperienced police communicate effectively with youth; incorporation of the
topic of community policing into recruit training; in-service training in de-escalation
techniques and conflict management and additional deployment of policewomen. Also
explored is the greater involvement of youth in police-community meetings.

It is considered that ‘community policing’, as a specific theoretical model, is the best
approach for policing at Macquarie Fields, and similar disadvantaged communities
where tensions exist between police and community members. Under the community
policing model, the focus of police is to build positive relationships with community
members (MacDonald, 2002) whilst addressing the social issues relating to the crime
problems (Kerley & Benson, 2000). In their efforts to prevent crime, police and the
community become partners (Hunter & Barker, 2008) in which residents participate
with police in making decisions to best handle crime problems (Palmiotto & Kingshott,
2010) whilst taking into account community values (Roberg, et al, 2005). It is argued
that the type of policing approaches, as contained within the community policing
model, could reduce police-community tensions at Macquarie Fields and facilitate
greater policing accountability to the local community.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned discussion, the complexity of the policing
situation at Macquarie Fields is also acknowledged. Macquarie Fields, similar to other
disadvantaged communities suffers from high crime rates and as outlined by the NSW
Government (2005), “The key objective of the NSW Police is to reduce crime and the
fear of crime” (p.56). In addition, the importance of the reduction of crime in high
crime areas has been supported by such authors as Reisig and Parks (2004). In order to reduce crime at Macquarie Fields, police are required to target, “repeat offenders and crime hot spots” (NSWP Corporate Plan, 2008, p.2). Although the measures undertaken by Macquarie Fields police such as ‘stops, searches and move ons’ appear to have been successful in reducing crime, they have created tensions between police and community members. In addition, they fail to address the underlying issues of the causes of crime which form an important component of the community policing philosophy (Whisenand & Ferguson, 2002). Furthermore, these crime reduction strategies appear to be detrimental to the achievement of community policing objectives, such as community partnership (Hunter & Barker, 2008).

**Recognition of the adverse impact of the socially disorganised local community upon police attitudes**

In terms of the problematic work environment encountered by police at Macquarie Fields and the influence of such upon police notions of accountability and partnership towards the local community, police management needs to recognise the negative impact which socially disorganised communities such as Macquarie Fields can have upon police attitudes (Prenzler, 1997; Sobol, 2010; Wortley, 1992) their professional practice (Ingram, 2007; Lawton, 2007; Lee et al., 2010; Marquart & Brock, 1993; Smith, 1986; Sorensen et al., 1993; Terrill & Mastrofski, 2006; Terrill & Reisig, 2003; Wu et al., 2009) subsequent community satisfaction (Brandl et al., 1994; Reisig 2002) and support (Weitzer, 2000).
As a starting point, and as suggested by Sobol (2010) police management need to seek frank feedback from their staff concerning their views of the local residents with whom they come in contact. Sobol (2010) considers that, “…these attitudes can assist policy makers such that they can devise ways in which these attitudes can be influenced in a positive direction” (Sobol, 2010, p.263). In addition, police management should seek feedback from street police as to what they consider their policing role entails within the community. This information should be gathered through regular surveys and/or interviews and/or focus groups involving the Macquarie Fields police. Furthermore, police management should use police complaints (Macintyre, Prenzler & Chapman, 2008; Walker, Alpert & Kenney, 2001) and injury data as part of an integrated approach to assist identify underlying problems between local police and community members. This may also be helpful in shaping management strategies to ensure that community policing initiatives and the underpinning rationales for such approaches are understood and practically applied during day to day duties.

**Address ‘crime-fighting’ mindset**

In regards to the implications of this study for policy and the subsequent training of police attached to the Macquarie Fields patrol, results revealed a focus on fighting crime amongst street police. This traditional crime-fighting model, which places emphasis on the detection and arrest of offenders (Palmiotto & Kingshott, 2010) can have crime-reduction advantages in crime intensive areas. However, associated police tactics such as stopping, searching, and aggressive interactions with community members, neglect the core components of community policing, that is, accountability, partnership and procedural justice. Furthermore, as argued by Kerley and Benson (2000), traditional policing approaches, “…do little to reduce community disorder and
are thought to lead to institutional violence and discrimination against poor and minority groups” (Kerley & Benson, 2000, p.48).

This present study has highlighted the attempts of police management to fulfill community policing objectives. However, these objectives have failed to be adopted into the day to day practices of street police. Macquarie Fields police management need to implement strategies which direct and encourage local police to embrace a service-oriented approach which requires listening to the concerns of residents and working with them to help address crime problems in more appropriate ways. For instance, as discussed by Brogden and Nijhar (2005) and Palmiotto and Kingshott (2010) under the community policing model, the reduction of crime is a task which should be undertaken collaboratively by police and residents. Although Macquarie Fields police management have made positive steps, through their involvement in community meetings, to adopt this collaborative crime-fighting approach with local residents, attention needs to be given to improve the manner in which street police conduct themselves and interact with community members during crime reduction strategies. This is particularly relevant to the behaviour of police during ‘stop, search and move on’ strategies conducted predominantly upon local youths socialising in public places which has been identified as a major source of community discontent.

Even though the reduction of crime and its associated fear is an important policing strategy in high crime areas such as Macquarie Fields, the manner in which these strategies are undertaken by police is also important (Reisig & Parks, 2004). It is suggested that crime reduction strategies formulated by Macquarie Fields police management, in an attempt to reduce the local crime rate, can be conducted in
conjunction with strategies to improve police-community relations. For instance, a study conducted by Davis, Mateu-Gelabert and Miller (2005) found that, during 1994, there was a substantial decrease in civilian complaints within two Bronx precincts, even though there had been an implementation of effective crime reduction strategies within those communities. The crime reduction strategies involved the targeting of drinking in public, fare evasion, vandalism, gun crime, youth violence and drug offences (Davis et al., 2005, p.230). The decrease in civilian complaints which occurred simultaneously with these crime reduction strategies was achieved through the introduction of a Courtesy Professionalism and Respect Policy (CPR). This was delivered via academy and in-service training. This policy addressed the manner in which officers were required to deal with members of the community (Davis et al., 2005) and was supported by disciplinary procedures which dealt with officers who failed to act appropriately. In addition, patrol commanders instilled within their officers a culture which frowned upon police receiving complaints from members of the public. This was achieved through the counselling of offending officers and disciplinary action consisting of duty re-assignment or loss of promotion opportunities for those officers who were repeat offenders.

Similar results have been found in other studies. For instance, Australian research conducted by Mazerolle, Bennett, Antrobus and Eggins (2011) reported the results of a Queensland study in which “procedural justice components” (p.3) were incorporated into the interactions of police conducting random breath tests (RBT) with motorists. One thousand six hundred and forty five motorists completed surveys following undertaking an RBT with police which involved procedural justice elements such as “Neutrality, Trustworthy Motives, Citizen Participation, Dignity and Respect”
A further 1102 motorists completed surveys after being exposed to routine RBT encounters with police. Mazerolle et al., (2011) reported that there were, … “significantly stronger perceptions of police fairness, police respect, compliance with police, satisfaction with police, trust in police and confidence in police” (Mazerolle et al., 2011, p. 7) amongst those motorists who received procedural justice elements in their RBT encounter with police. As noted in the literature review of this thesis, procedural justice involves the perception of “fairness” (Murphy et al., 2008, p.139) which a member of the public holds following their interaction with police. Perceptions of procedural justice held by members of a community increase the legitimacy of police which enhances community member’s willingness to assist police (Murphy et al., 2008).

In terms of the crime reduction focus at Macquarie Fields, it would appear this has failed to address the poor relationship between police and community. In this present study almost all community service respondents mentioned that the local residents at Macquarie Fields with whom they interacted possessed a lack of ‘regard’ or ‘respect’ for and ‘trust’ in police. In addition, various respondents provided accounts of poor interactions they had witnessed firsthand occurring between police and community members.

Macquarie Fields police management needs to develop a culture within its patrol which instils in their officers the priority of developing community respect for police. In order to achieve this goal, police management at Macquarie Fields need to play a crucial role in shaping and influencing the attitudes of subordinate staff concerning the manner in which they interact with community members during crime reduction strategies, such
as ‘stops, searches and move-ons’. The importance of the role of police supervisors in shaping the attitudes of junior police has been highlighted by researchers such as Engel and Worden (2003). Their qualitative research involving observations and interviewing of 322 street police and 88 supervisors from various American patrols revealed that street police, “…whose supervisors are strongly oriented toward aggressive patrol spend less time on problem solving” (Engel & Worden, 2003, p.157).

In fact, as identified by Chappell (2009); Peak, Gaines and Glensor (2010) and Vito, Walsh and Kunselman (2005), in order for community policing to succeed within a police department, supervisors and managers play a critical role in street police adopting community policing philosophies. Supervisors and managers need to “…change from being a ‘controller’ primarily concerned with rules, to being a ‘facilitator’ and ‘coach’ ”(Peak et al., (2010, p.90).

Findings of this thesis suggest that management at Macquarie Fields have left community policing initiatives predominantly with the patrol’s Crime management Unit and senior management staff, although, it is acknowledged that there has been some involvement of general duties police. Furthermore, it would appear that the primary focus of general duties police is responding to complaints from residents and undertaking crime reduction activities such as ‘stops, searches and move-ons’. It is argued that these policing activities do not encourage the practice of community policing philosophies such as ‘community partnership’ because, as discussed by Ford and Morash (2002):

The movement to community policing signals an attempt to redefine the role and responsibilities of police agencies. The roles and responsibilities change
from a focus on routine patrol to more emphasis on direct interaction with citizens, an emphasis on prevention rather than reaction to crime activity (Ford & Morash, 2002, p.126).

Perhaps in order to assist general duties police at Macquarie Fields, and as suggested by Chappell (2009), “…more effort should go toward training middle management in the skills and philosophies of community policing” (p.23). In addition, as highlighted by Engel and Worden (2003), in order for a police department to have their street police adopt and practice community policing skills, police supervisors need to, “effectively communicate their priorities for problem solving and community policing” (Engel & Worden, 2003, p.160).

Police management also needs to facilitate attitudinal change amongst street police who have the greatest contact with the community, which, in turn, encourages and rewards pro-active community-policing initiatives amongst street police. As discussed by Skogan (2005) the relationship between street police and their communities can be influenced through organisational “training and supervision practices” (Skogan, 2005, p.298). Internal training courses should be constructed and delivered at Macquarie Fields which emphasise, “proactive work, problem solving and networking generally” (Fleming & O’Reilly, 2009, p.75). The achievement of such an objective could possibly be facilitated through training which incorporates the presentation of case studies delivered by selected police.

These case studies would provide examples of police encountering residents experiencing social problems, and the ways in which police attempted to solve those
problems through networking and seeking the assistance of government/non-
government service providers. By placing greater emphasis upon community service
within internal police training, police management can make inroads into attitudinal
change amongst staff, and incorporate community-policing principles into the daily
practices of Macquarie Fields street police. In order to support this strategy, police
could be provided with a pocket size directory which contains the details of
government and non government providers servicing the Macquarie Fields community.
During their daily interactions with community members, police would be able to
provide members experiencing difficulties contact details of service providers who
could offer possible assistance.

Additionally, police management at Macquarie Fields needs to pay closer attention to
the induction of new police into the patrol. The findings in this study highlight that new
police experience the greatest problems in interacting with the community. Some
community service participants considered that the confrontational approach adopted
by some of the young inexperienced police originates from an excessive sense of
power. As suggested by Herbert (2006) perhaps a solution to counter these perceptions
of power amongst young inexperienced police is “to attempt to counteract powerful
subcultural trends toward a heightened sense of authority” (Herbert, 2006, p. 500). This
could possibly be achieved through Macquarie Fields police management impressing
upon new police that interactions with community members, particularly youth, must
be undertaken in a manner which is fair, “neutral and consistent” (Hinds, 2007, p.203).
In turn, this could be implemented through policy which stipulates the manner in which
police are required to interact (see Davis et al., 2005).
Conceivably another solution is for police management to assign more experienced police at the Macquarie Fields patrol and team these officers together with less experienced police. Research conducted by Kaminski, Digiovanni and Downs (2004); Sun et al., (2008) found that experienced officers are less likely to engage in force than their younger, inexperienced colleagues. Furthermore, Paoline and Terrill (2007) advocate that by pairing experienced and inexperienced officers this may reduce the use of force amongst inexperienced police. The authors state this strategy, “…may help to teach the craft to less experienced peers in ways that training facilities can not” (Paoline & Terrill, 2007, p.193). Through undertaking these aforementioned strategies to help address the problems experienced by new police, a sense of procedural justice can be developed amongst community members, which can increase police legitimacy within the community and promote greater community cooperation with police (Hinds, 2007).

Another strategy that could be implemented to address the ‘crime fighting mindset’ of Macquarie Fields police is for management to place greater emphasis on Problem Oriented Policing (POP). Goldstein (1990) described POP as focusing on:

…the substance of policing-on the problems that constitute the business of the police and on how they handle them. This focus establishes a better balance between the reactive and proactive aspects of policing. It also creates a vehicle for making more effective use of the community and rank-and-file officers in getting the police job done. In its broadest context, problem-oriented policing is a comprehensive plan for improving policing in which the high priority attached to addressing substantive problems shapes the police agency,
influencing all changes in personnel, organization, and procedures (Goldstein, 1990, p.32).

Furthermore, as highlighted by Braga (2002, p.12) POP concentrates on, “…focusing police attention on the underlying causes of problems behind a string of crime incidents” which the author asserts requires police to do more than simply identify the, “places and times” where crime occurs (Braga, 2002, p.12).

This is in contrast to the predominant policing strategy currently in use to reduce crime at Macquarie Fields. As discussed by senior police manager Steve, police identify the location where a pattern of crime is occurring and ‘go and punish that area’ using ‘move on and search’ powers. This strategy, known as ‘hot spot’ policing is defined by Kochel (2011) as, “…a place based strategy that typically entails a concentrated police presence in a small geographic area” (p.2). Although ‘hot spot’ policing can be an effective crime reduction strategy, Kochel (2011) warns that associated aggressive police tactics are harmful for police legitimacy in disadvantaged communities. The author argues that residents in such communities are already, “…more skeptical and less trusting of the police” (Kochel, 2011, p.366). Although some writers argue that ‘hot spot’ strategies used in isolation, do not constitute a POP strategy (Bullock, Erol & Tilley, 2006; Braga, 2002) other writers consider that it can be used as part of a POP approach (Rojek, 2003).

It is suggested that Macquarie Fields police management should consider using POP strategies in their attempts to reduce local crime. There is a possibility that this could reduce police-youth conflict arising from an over reliance on ‘hot spot’ policing.
strategies. As emphasised by police manager Steve a great number of crimes committed in Macquarie fields are perpetrated by youth against youth. Furthermore, police and community service participants commented that police respond by targeting youths congregating in public spaces within these ‘hot spot’ areas. Possibly, by utilising a POP approach, police could liaise with government and non-government community centres servicing Macquarie Fields with the view of exploring different alternatives to youths socialising in public spaces in ‘hot spot’ areas. One solution would be for police and community workers to encourage youths to socialise in local community centres which perhaps would lessen young peoples’ risk of victimisation at the hands of offenders and reduce their confrontational interactions with police during ‘move on and search’ procedures.

In addition, police through the use of interviews, could examine the motivations of young offenders (Braga, 2002) with the view of referring them to social service agencies, in an attempt to address the underlying causes of their offending behaviour. This is consistent with the views of Maguire, Uchida and Hassell (2010) who contend that, “POP reformers encourage police agencies to partner with other agencies and organisations to develop effective responses to community problems” (Maguire, et al., 2010, p.12).

Another measure which could possibly be used to address the ‘crime fighting’ mindset of police at Macquarie Fields is the implementation of wider measures to provide the community with opportunity to assist in local crime reduction. As argued by DeLeon-Granados (1999), “Official crime prevention can swallow up informal community-based responses, can alienate segments of the population and can chew up police
resources by focusing on arrest instead of strategies than can potentially stabilize a community’s social ecology” (DeLeon-Granados, 1999, p.7).

One such alternative is the use of community members to assist in the facilitation of informal social control. Perhaps Macquarie Fields police in liaison with government and non-government agencies servicing Macquarie Fields could investigate the possibility of some residents being trained to use informal social control skills to deal with community members who transgress community norms. As suggested by Warner, Beck and Ohmer (2010), to be able to use informal social control within a community, “Residents should be educated about the importance of informal social control and provided with the skills to intervene in inappropriate behaviour that are nonthreatening and nonconflict-generating” (Warner, et al., 2010, p.362). The authors argue that for such a process to occur within a community there would firstly need to be, “…a sense of shared values/norms” (p.360), along with an expectation amongst residents that if values are transgressed community members will, “…directly intervene in a respectful and supportive manner” (Warner, et al., 2010, p.360).

As proposed by the authors, in order to achieve this goal a number of steps need to be undertaken. Firstly, community meetings led by program leaders would need to be conducted to identify commonly held values amongst residents. This would be followed by the wider community being approached to identify community values. This would, “…allow residents to begin to understand the neighbourhood norms as others see them, and begin a process in which non-normative behaviour is defined through communication and interaction among group members” (Warner, et al., 2010, p.361). The final step involves residents being taught informal social control skills.
This would include, “…how to intervene in respectful, noncoercive ways when faced with inappropriate neighbourhood behaviour” (Warner, et al., 2010, p.362). Skills taught would consist of “…reflective listening, re-framing, non-violent communication and balancing negative statements with positive statements” (Warner, et al., 2010, p.362).

Another strategy, which could also be implemented at Macquarie Fields, is the introduction of social skills training for youth in schools. A significant finding of this present study is that the poor relations between police and community at Macquarie Fields are predominantly caused by the problematic interactions between police and local youth. As a measure to counter these negative interactions, consideration should be given to providing local school students social training. It is proposed that this training may reduce the antisocial behaviour of some young people and help them avoid negative contact with the police. Losel and Beelmann (2006) noted that, “…deficits in social problem-solving as reliable risk factors for antisocial behaviour” (p.34). Additionally, the authors proposed there is an, “…overall positive and significant effect of social competence training on the antisocial behaviour of children and youths (Losel & Beelmann, 2006, p.44).

An example of such a program is the ‘Pathways to prevention’ project which commenced in Brisbane, Queensland in 2001. This project has the goal of preventing, “…anti social behaviour among young children as they progress into adolescence” (Homel, 2009, p.25). The author observed that children between the ages of four to six are targeted and the program’s focus is upon, “…enhancing their communication and social skills and empowering their families, schools and communities to provide
supportive environments for positive development” (Homel, 2009, pp. 25-26).
Furthermore, early results from the project were showing promising results (Homel, 2009, p.26).

Perhaps another initiative to reduce local police-citizen conflict is community empowerment, achieved through the regeneration of the Macquarie Fields area. This may also provide the additional benefit of improving the standard of living of Macquarie Fields residents. In terms of community empowerment, Welsh and Hoshi (2002) note:

Community empowerment is concerned with the sharing of power with residents, often of public housing estates, in decision-making processes and management activities that impact on, either directly or indirectly those social conditions believed to sustain crime in residential settings (Welsh & Hoshi, 2002, p.167).

The aim of such an activity is for community members to gain greater satisfaction in their locality thereby encouraging them to, “…take greater interest in, and responsibility for, their area of residence” (Bennett, 1998, p.376). In regards to community regeneration, Welsh and Hoshi (2002) observe this comprises of community safety and the resources a community possesses, “…to ward off the onset of factors conducive to less than desirable levels of delinquency and crime, such as the “flight” of middle and upper class residents, the loss of public and private services and an increase in rental properties” (Welsh & Hoshi, 2002, p.168).
An example of community empowerment being achieved through the regeneration of a local area is provided by Bailey (2010). The author described the ‘Urban II’ project which comprised of the regeneration of Stockwell and Larkhall located in Lambeth, England. This was overseen by a board of management which comprised in part of local residents. The aim of this project consisted of, “…building the capacity of the local community and increasing the involvement of local people” (Bailey, 2010, p.327). One such initiative involved the training of thirty local unemployed people to become community researchers. Skills taught to these people included, “…personal development, action planning, interpersonal and interviewing skills” (Bailey, 2010, p.328). Eighteen participants were subsequently employed as community researchers.

The author commented that the regeneration project had empowered those individuals who had become board members and researchers. He observed, “Many of these have progressed to further education or new jobs and have acquired confidence and new skills to enable them to acquire new contracts elsewhere” (Bailey, 2010, p.329).

Furthermore, the regeneration of these areas provided additional, “…services and facilities” (p.329) as well as, “…extensive community involvement” (Bailey, 2010, p.329).

It is worth noting though that these aforementioned strategies involving informal social control, social skills training and community empowerment are beyond the control and capacity of police alone. It is suggested that these approaches would require a ‘whole of government’ approach involving Education and Community departments.
Implications for police practice involving police training

The following discussion focuses upon the implications for practice concerning the enhancement of police training and implementation of practical policing strategies to assist police perform duties within the problematic work environment at Macquarie Fields with the aim to improving police-community relations. It is significant that inexperienced police arrive at Macquarie Fields inadequately prepared to effectively handle the social problems in the patrol. Frightened, uncertain of their powers, members of an ‘us’ community against an alien Other, the key question becomes, could they be in need of better preparation? It is to recruit training we now turn. There are a number of practical implications arising from this study in terms of the training of new police and the continuing education of experienced officers to assist those police meet the challenges of the Macquarie Fields work environment and associated policing role. It is also noted that there is a lack of research on the effects of police training upon specific areas of police performance. Any training strategies implemented to support Macquarie Fields police would need to be supported by research to measure the effectiveness of such strategies.

As highlighted in this study, new and experienced officers reported the initial shock they received at the commencement of their duties at Macquarie Fields. This shock revolved around perceived differences in lifestyle and moral values between police and community members and the level of disrespect shown by community members towards police. This has created a significant gap between police and community members which, as considered by Vito et al., (2005) can adversely impact upon the success of community policing initiatives. The below diagram provides a summary of
factors pertaining to the Macquarie Fields work environment and associated policing role in which enhancements to police training could contribute to the improvement of police-community relations. These include: police training required to assist officers understand the perceived differences in lifestyle; values and respect between themselves and community members with whom they come in contact; enhancements in police training required to assist young inexperienced police communicate effectively with community members, particularly youth; the topic of community policing to be added to the curriculum for new police and undertaken during the probationary phase of their training and a review required of the impact of certain police defensive tactics upon the problematic police-community relationship.

Diagram 5: Illustrates practice and policy implications from this study relating to the Macquarie Fields police work environment and associated policing role in which enhancements to police training could assist police-community relations
Training required to assist officers understand social difference

Concerning lifestyle and moral differences, police participants, such as Abby, who was allocated Macquarie Fields as her first station, recalled the initial shock she received concerning the lifestyle differences she perceived between herself and the community members with whom she came in contact. Police participant Mike’s first station was also Macquarie Fields. Even though Mike grew up in Department of Housing estates, he recalled his first day of duty at Macquarie Fields and the shock he received from observing the condition of some of the houses and the number of very young children running around.

It is clear that police need to develop a better understanding and appreciation of the adverse impact of social disadvantage upon the lives of many of the Macquarie Fields residents. In terms of newly graduated police deployed to the Macquarie Fields patrol, it is recommended that prior to the commencement of their duties; they undertake service learning, also known as ‘field placement’, with a government/non-government service provider servicing the Macquarie Fields community. The practice of using field placements has been undertaken previously by the NSWP, in conjunction with its education partner Charles Sturt University, to assist in the teaching of police recruits. However this practice ceased in 2002, at the direction of the Police Minister at the time, Mr Michael Costa.

Jacoby (1996) defines service learning as, “...a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities intentionally designed to promote student learning and
development. Reflection and reciprocity are key concepts of service-learning” (Jacoby, 1996, p.5).

There would be a number of benefits associated with new police undertaking service learning. It would provide them with an insight into the underlying social problems being experienced by many of the local residents (Berman, 2006 & McEwen, 1996) an appreciation of the differences of community members (Berman, 2006; Simons & Cleary, 2006) and the types of services available for people suffering social disadvantage (Berman, 2006). In addition, Giles and Eyler (1994) consider that by undertaking service learning, students, “...became less likely to blame social service clients for their misfortunes” (Giles & Eyler, 1994, p.327).

It is suggested that field placements would assist in the success of community policing at Macquarie Fields, as they would provide new police with an insight into “local norms and values and individual needs” (Roberg et al., 2005, p.83) which forms part of the community policing approach. Furthermore, it is suggested that new police, in developing an understanding of the local community, could improve the relationship between police and residents, which MacDonald (2002) argues is “a major function” (p.597) of the community policing process. It is noted that curriculum taught to NSWP recruits during their training encompasses issues pertaining to social disadvantage; problem oriented policing and police accountability. However, findings from this study indicate this has failed to be internalised and applied during day to day policing practices. Service learning is designed to enhance what students have learnt in the classroom in terms of, “...environmental, sociological, and political contexts of issues and theories” (Goldberg & Coufal, 2009, p.39).
In terms of the reported perceptions of ‘otherness’ experienced by street police at Macquarie Fields and its adverse impact upon community policing initiatives, this needs to be addressed by police management, because, as highlighted by Vito et al., (2005) “police must be able to truly relate to a community in order to understand its problems and offer creative responses to local problems” (Vito et al., 2005, p.491).

In terms of new police, perceptions of ‘otherness’ between themselves and community members could possibly be addressed by the previously discussed ‘service learning’, field placement strategy. Through interacting with community members in a non policing environment, new police could develop an awareness of social problems and the detrimental impact of such upon the lives of many community members. It is suggested this could provide these officers with a greater understanding of those community members. In relation to experienced police performing duties at Macquarie Fields, it is recommended, in order to counter ongoing perceptions of ‘otherness’, that internal training programs are conducted which provide an insight into issues pertaining to social disadvantage and its adverse impact upon individuals’ lives.

The level of disrespect directed towards police during their interactions with community members was a common theme amongst police participants. Jack, for instance, spoke of initially being stunned by the manner in which he and work colleagues were addressed by community members. In addition, some experienced officers spoke of the shock they received at the level of community disrespect. Bonnie for instance, an officer of six years experience, touched upon her first impression of the Macquarie Field’s work environment following her transfer from a busy Sydney suburban station. She recalled the initial shock received at the level of disrespect and
physical abuse directed towards her by local youth during interactions. Police management needs to address this initial shock, as well as the reported ongoing occurrences of disrespect directed towards police. As discussed by Arter (2006) “Disrespect directed towards the officer degrades the officer personally and is viewed as an attack on the legitimacy of the officer’s position” (Arter, 2006, p.90).

Perhaps one possible solution to reducing the level of disrespect directed towards Macquarie Fields police is the introduction of police mentoring schemes, in which local police become mentors for ‘at-risk’ youth. Findings previously highlighted in this study revealed that the introduction of police-youth camps by police management were a significant success. It brought police and the troubled youths who attended such camps closer, and fostered co-operative interactions. For instance, Arthur a police participant spoke of the change the camp had brought about in terms of his relationship with the youths who attended. Arthur found that, following the camp, those youths would speak to him during the course of his patrols. Furthermore, Arthur was able to diffuse a confrontational situation between police and a youth due to him knowing the youth from a previous camp.

It is contended that, similar to the police-youth camps, mentoring would allow police and youth to interact and get to know each other in informal settings. This may bring police and some of the local youth closer and, over time, reduce the level of disrespect levelled by local youth towards police. Arter (2006) identifies two distinct advantages from police implementing mentoring programs with troubled youth. Firstly, youths gain in “…self esteem and self confidence” (Arter, 2006 p.87) and secondly, it can
provide those police involved an insight into the issues impacting upon the youths, which can enhance the relationship the officer has with other youths.

**Enhancements in police training required to assist young inexperienced police communicate effectively with community members, particularly youth**

As previously highlighted, inexperienced police at Macquarie Fields encountered difficulties in communicating with community members, particularly local youth. This had been observed by community service providers who reported that young inexperienced police tended to adopt a confrontational approach in their interactions with local youth. For instance, Andrew, a community service provider, had observed young police puffing their chests out as they approached local youths. He considered that this body language exhibited by the officers conveyed a message to the youths that a confrontational interaction was about to commence. Furthermore, community service provider participant Andy and Andrew suggested that the causation of such confrontational interactions may be due to the uneasiness of young inexperienced police in interacting with local youth. These reported difficulties exacerbate problematic perceptions of procedural justice amongst community members, which in turn impacts adversely upon the legitimacy of police at Macquarie Fields. Although it is acknowledged that current recruit training for NSWP does touch upon the topic of communicating with young people, the curriculum needs to provide further attention to the issue of effective communication with youths from disadvantaged backgrounds. This is of particular importance because, as discussed by community service participant, Robert, social disadvantage impacts adversely upon various young peoples’ abilities to communicate effectively with police.
Also, in light of research which indicates that young inexperienced officers are more likely to resort to force in their dealings with community members (Kaminski et al., 2004; Paoline & Terrill, 2007; Terrill & Mastrofski, 2006; Sun et al., 2008) perhaps specific additional training needs to be delivered to police recruits. As suggested by community service participant Andrew, police recruits need to be taught skills in communicating with youths similar to that provided to trainee teachers. For instance, recruits should be taught how to avoid placing youths in confrontational situations in front of their peers. Andrew also considered that recruits should be taught communication skills which enable them to ‘understand the effects and kickbacks of body language, tone of voice, cognitive entry points to a conversation’. The Crime and Misconduct Commission (2009) whilst discussing training to assist officers interact more effectively with youths, recommended:

...programs for police that raise their awareness of these concerns and emphasise effective interpersonal and communications skills may help officers to reduce the likelihood of negative consequences occurring in their interactions with young people (Crime and Misconduct Commission, 2009, p.48).

**Incorporation of community policing into the curriculum for new police to be undertaken during the probationary phase of their training**

Another implication arising from this present study, in terms of police training, is the incorporation of the topic of ‘community policing’ in the curriculum for new police. This should be undertaken within their first year of service as probationary constables. Police recruit training in New South Wales is comprised of five fourteen week sessions. The first two sessions are undertaken by police recruits prior to them being sworn in as probationary constables (Charles Sturt University, 2011). Sessions three to
five are undertaken after the recruits have been appointed as probationary constables and are performing duties at a police station, during their first year of employment as police. During sessions one and two training conducted at the police academy, recruits are taught subjects which include topics such as ethics, social inequality and young peoples’ use of streets and public spaces. Recruits are not taught the principles of community policing during this time.

During sessions three to five, probationary constables undertake the subject, ‘Problem Oriented Policing & Vulnerable People’ (Charles Sturt University, 2011). The objective of this subject is for new police to develop an understanding of vulnerability, victims and persons at risk of harm. The probationary constable is then required to use Problem Oriented Policing principles in relation to a crime hot spot, involving members of a vulnerable group as victims or offenders. Also included is the identification of community service groups, which may assist in solving the crime hot spot problem. Although this subject does teach new police POP, within a collaborative framework, to assist identified vulnerable groups, it fails to teach the principles of community policing. New police are not taught community policing within the context of police being accountable to and working in partnership with their local communities to help reduce crime problems and alleviate residents’ fears of crime (Murray, 2002; Palmiotto & Kingshott, 2010; Roberg et al., 1999; Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1996).

**Impact of certain police defensive tactics upon the problematic police-community relationship**

Another finding that could have an implication for police policy and practice at Macquarie Fields is the detrimental impact of certain approved police defensive tactics
upon police-community relations. One such defensive, tactic known as ‘check drill’, is taught to all police within New South Wales. It can be used upon an individual who aggressively approaches too closely towards an officer. In using the ‘check drill’ procedure, the officer pushes an individual in the chest, knocking them to the ground. In addition, police are trained in the use of approved body strikes upon individuals who are offering resistance during an arrest. These consist of blows delivered upon the individual’s thighs.

It must be noted, though, that the following policy implication concerning reviewing the appropriateness of these defensive tactics at Macquarie Fields is based upon interview data obtained from a single police participant, Steve, a senior police manager. In terms of this present study, in the absence of other corroborating data, this finding cannot be substantiated. Nonetheless, this is considered a potentially significant issue because, as highlighted by Steve, these defensive tactics are often misperceived by the recipient as equalling an assault by police, and impacts adversely upon their opinions of police. It is envisaged that these defensive tactics may be particularly damaging to police-community relations at Macquarie Fields when police use these tactics in a public space. Community members witnessing such an occurrence may not be aware that the police actions are lawful, and misperceive these as police acts of aggression. As mentioned by Jefferson (1991) residents’ perceptions of police misconduct and disrespect can create negative attitudes towards police. This, in turn, can remove public support for policing initiatives (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003).

In regards to the policing of communities, training for NSWP recruits consists of a generic ‘one size fits all’ model. This is particularly so in the training of police
defensive tactics such as ‘check drill’. It is suggested, however, that training in the ‘check drill’ method fails to take into account the unique characteristics of the Macquarie Fields police work environment, which is characterised by a fragile relationship between police and those community members with whom they interact. It is acknowledged that whilst the safety of police is rightly a priority, taking into account the problematic police-community relationship occurring at Macquarie Fields and, no doubt, other similarly disadvantaged communities where fragile police-community relations exist, police could explore the use of less confrontational defensive tactics. For instance, police manager Steve commented that, in previous times, police faced with an individual who, whilst not having committed an offence, was behaving in an aggressive manner, would attempt to step back and try to communicate with the person in an effort to calm them down and avoid a confrontational situation. However, now in more recent times, dealing with a similar situation, police are permitted to utilise the ‘check drill’ procedure.

Police use of force within any community is an issue of importance. As stressed by the Office of Police Integrity Victoria (2009), any injuries sustained by police or members of the public arising from police-community interactions are, “…important indicators of the effectiveness of policing and our social cohesiveness” (Police Integrity Victoria, 2009, p.8). In terms of the Macquarie Fields patrol and the attempts of management to forge closer ties with the local community, management should pay notice to research findings concerning the relationship between disadvantaged communities and an increase in police use of force (Lawton, 2007; Lee et al., 2010; Sun et al., 2008; Terrill & Reisig, 2003). Perhaps, as a measure to try to ensure that ‘check drill’ procedures are used by police only when absolutely necessary, Macquarie Fields Police should
conduct in-service courses for police. As suggested by Terrill and Mastrofski (2006), a possible strategy to reduce police use of force within disadvantaged communities can be found in, “cultural diversity training emphasizing departmental values and initiating open discussions on the importance of accountability to the law” (Terrill & Mastrofski, 2006, p.244).

As another measure to reduce the use of force practices such as ‘check drill’ at Macquarie Fields, greater emphasis could be placed upon de-escalation strategies. De-escalation strategies in a policing environment involve police using particular knowledge and skills in an attempt to reduce the tension of a potentially volatile situation (Olivia, Morgan & Crompton, 2010). These skills include effective communication which involves active listening which is taught to police through their participation in role plays (Olivia, et al., 2010). Research conducted by Wilson (1992) revealed the usefulness of de-escalation strategies. The study involved the administration of surveys to 115 police from the United Kingdom and 48 officers from the South Australian Police Force. Findings revealed that officers who received the greatest physical resistance and assault from members of the public were those, “…who placed greater emphasis on the use of arrest” (Wilson, 1992, p.23). This study also found that police who utilised, “bargaining and compromising” (p.23) skills reported overall less resistance from community members. The author recommended that police needed, “The acquisition of interpersonal and problem solving skills” (Wilson, 1992, p.24) which needed to be delivered through participation in role plays.

Other research, supportive of de-escalation strategies, was conducted by Wilson, Gross and Beck (1999). This involved the administration of surveys to 323 general duties
police from Victoria and New South Wales. Findings revealed that police could de-escalate a use of force situation if they, “…possess low anger arousal and have low hostility while at the same time exhibiting the verbal and emotional skills necessary to act confidently and assertively” (Wilson et al., 1994, p.19). In addition, Porter, Prenzler and Fleming (2011) highlighted initiatives implemented by Tasmanian Police which led to a decrease in complaints against officers. Porter et al., (2011) found that the Tasmanian Police through placing greater emphasis on “communication and de-escalation technique” (p.11) alongside with “stress inoculation” (p.10) training contributed to a decline in citizen complaints. The stress inoculation strategies included, “…more scenario-based training, where scenarios were more realistic in terms of both the amount of stress produced in participants (stress inoculation) and the range of potential outcomes for the situations, dependant on the participants’ behaviour” (p.10). The authors concluded, “Proactive strategies at the recruitment and training phases are likely to have impacted positively on the current workforce” (Porter et al., 2001, p.18).

It is noted that de-escalation skills such as assertiveness and active listening are taught in Session One of the Associate Degree in Policing Practice for NSWP recruits (Charles Sturt University, 2011). However, there is a time lapse of some four months between recruits being taught these skills and actually applying them ‘on the street’ in a real policing situation. Perhaps, as a solution to this time gap problem, police patrols serving disadvantaged communities such as Macquarie Fields should incorporate de-escalation strategies and associated role plays within in-service courses. This would ensure that these skills would remain current for operational police.
Furthermore, in order to enhance de-escalation techniques, police management at Macquarie Fields could also consider conflict management training (CMT) be provided to street police. As previously mentioned, a significant finding of this present study was that conflict was a major feature of the Macquarie Fields police-community relationship. Lau, Li, Mak and Chung (2004) define police-community conflict as, “…the process that the public feels dissatisfied within the officer’s handling in police-public interaction during the course of duty of the officer concerned” (Lau, et al., 2004, p.98). The authors argued that police-citizen conflict has an adverse impact upon the physiological well-being of officers and image of police organisations. Conflict management is defined as dealing with public dissatisfaction by applying, “…relevant knowledge and skills” (Lau et al., 2004, p.98) with an objective of, “…reducing the negative consequences of the conflict” (Lau, et al., 2004, p.98).

The authors reported upon the results of a CMT programme delivered to Hong Kong traffic officers. This was initially delivered to 21 officers who upon successful completion of their training trained a further 211 officers. The CMT programme consisted of:

- Increasing participants’ self awareness of own emotional reactions to conflicts, facilitating early signs’ detection and sensitivity to own CM style, strengthening participants’ interpersonal communication skills and enhancing skills in emotional regulation, particularly anger management in facing conflict situations (Lau, et al., 2004, p.101).

The authors found that police participants exhibited, “…significant improvements in their self-efficacy, knowledge and skills in CM, and that the effects could generalise to
their daily work and be sustained over a period of time” (Lau, et al., 2004, p.105). Furthermore, the authors discovered that, “…participants demonstrated significant improvements in their confidence in handling conflicts” (p.105).

Comparable results have been reported by Brondolo, Eichler and Taravella (2003) regarding a study involving New York traffic police and the introduction of an anger management program. Brondolo et al., (2003) stated that the objective of the program was to, “decrease the rate of civilian complaints and improve agent safety” (Brondolo et al., 2003). One hundred and fourteen officers participated in the program and the authors found that the program, “…was effective in reducing the rates of civilian complaints” (p.8) against those traffic enforcement officers whom had participated in the program.

Another strategy, which could possibly be employed by Macquarie Fields police to reduce police-citizen conflict and use of force, is the deployment of additional policewomen to the patrol. The benefits of such a strategy have been supported by research undertaken by Wilson and Braithwaite (1996). This study involved 4 female and 12 male officers from two Adelaide police stations. It found that the female officers, “…preferred to use information exchange, support behaviours and rejecting comments” (Wilson & Braithwaite, 1996, p.vi) whilst their male counterparts took a, “dominating controlling role” (Wilson & Braithwaite, 1996, p.vi). The authors also found that the male officers experienced more verbal abuse, defensive behaviours, and physical resistance from members of the community compared to their female colleagues. In addition, research undertaken by Rabe-Hemp (2008) involving interviews conducted with 38 female officers found that the participants, “…described
using a divergent set of police behaviours in their interactions with citizens, including more empathy and communication” (Rabe-Hemp, 2008, p.123).

These findings have been somewhat supported by the comments of Kakar (2002) who argued that:

…increasing the number of women in police departments may reduce the use of excessive force by police and improve police effectiveness and service to communities. Consequently, the continued underrepresentation of women in policing is contributing to and exacerbating law enforcement’s excessive force problems (Kakar, 2002, p.242).

In contrast however, research conducted by Rabe-Hemp and Schuck (2007) discovered that:

The findings do bring into question the theoretical assertion that female officers are better than male officers at de-escalating potentially violent situations. Perhaps in situations where conflict already is occurring, such as arrest situations, a female officer’s ability to de-escalate that violence is limited (Rabe-Hemp & Schuck, 2007, p.423).

In terms of the use of ‘check drill’ procedures in Macquarie Fields and similar disadvantaged communities, it is informative to note the comments of Wilson and Braithwaite (1996) who observed, “Use of any physical act by a police officer virtually eliminates the opportunity of de-escalating conflict” (Wilson & Braithwaite, 1996, p.vii). It is considered that this issue of ‘check drill’ should be the subject of future
review and research, in terms of the Macquarie Fields patrol and other similar disadvantaged communities.

**Greater involvement of local disadvantaged youth in police-community meetings**

In addition to the implications pertaining to training and the use of certain police defensive tactics, another implication, in terms of local policy, is that Macquarie Fields police facilitate greater involvement of local disadvantaged youth in police-community meetings and seek their views concerning levels of satisfaction with the service of police. Steden et al., (2011) in advocating for the need for community participation in community policing state, “Nonetheless efforts to engage residents in making neighbourhoods better places to live play an increasingly vital role in rethinking the local handling of communal crime and disorder” (Steden et al., 2011, pp.434-435).

Findings reported here revealed the dissatisfaction of community members concerning their interactions with Macquarie Fields police. Although young people from the local Department of Housing estates experienced the greatest contact with Macquarie Fields police, these community members are not represented at police-community meetings. In fact, as indicated by police participant, Bonnie, the average age of local residents attending the police-community meetings ranged from about forty to fifty and older.

In order to improve the relationship between Macquarie Fields police and local youth, it is suggested that Macquarie Fields police management need to provide this group of community members with a ‘voice’. This could possibly be achieved through police encouraging greater attendance of young people from the Department of Housing estates at community meetings. Thereby, providing the youth with an opportunity to
articulate their views concerning policing at Macquarie Fields and to provide police management with information which could assist in the formulation of strategies to help improve the relationship between police and those youth with whom they come in contact. It is worth noting that community meetings, in their current form, would be unlikely to attract young people as these meetings typically draw participants from a, “…middle aged, middle class population” (Steden, et al., 2011, p.433). Consequently, some consideration needs to be given as to how best to design and promote these meetings. It may even be worth exploring alternative forums of engagement with young people which are not meeting based.

As well as seeking feedback from Department of Housing youth through their involvement in police-community meetings, Macquarie Fields police management needs to seek further feedback, of a more detailed nature, through the participation of these youths in focus groups which address policing at Macquarie Fields. The benefits of seeking feedback from young people through focus groups have been supported by Williams (1999) including exposing, “…certain barriers that hinder community involvement, citizen participation, and community-agency integration” (Williams, 1999, p.151).

It is noted, however, that there are challenges associated with encouraging residents from disadvantaged communities, especially young people, to participate in community policing projects such as police-community meetings. For instance, some authors argue that disadvantaged communities possess a distrust of police amongst residents and this adversely impacts upon the success of any such initiatives (Brogden & Nijhar, 2005; Hawdon & Ryan, 2003). Additionally, as argued by Flint (2002) and Steden, et al.,
(2011) individuals must feel they belong to a community before they are willing to participate in community policing projects.

Summary

This chapter presented this study’s recommendations concerning implications for policy, practice and research. It was recommended that Macquarie Fields police management needed to recognise the adverse impact of the socially disorganised Macquarie Fields community upon police attitudes. Furthermore, strategies were required to be undertaken by management to address this issue. These included data being captured through focus groups, surveys, and interviews concerning police perceptions of their role. Also discussed were ways to address the ‘crime fighting’ mindset of Macquarie Fields police. These involved police management encouraging a service-oriented approach; additional experienced police being paired up with inexperienced officers; more emphasis upon problem oriented policing strategies; greater involvement of community in reduction of crime; school children being provided training in social skills and the empowerment of the local community through regeneration.

This chapter also discussed implications for police training with a focus on supporting police perform their duties at Macquarie Fields with the objective of enhancing police-community relations. Strategies discussed included police being provided training to assist in the understanding of perceived lifestyle and social differences; inexperienced police being provided with training to help them communicate effectively with youth; the topic of community policing being integrated into recruit training; de-escalation techniques and conflict management being delivered to police via in-service training.
and increasing the number of policewomen performing duties. Furthermore, greater involvement of youth in police-community meetings was also explored.

The following chapter, Chapter 10 presents this study’s conclusion. Also discussed are the limitations of this study and implications for future research.
CHAPTER 10
CONCLUSION

Introduction

This chapter discusses this study’s conclusion, the limitations of this study and implications for future research. The purpose of this current research was to examine whether community-policing initiatives implemented by Macquarie Fields police management following the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots have changed police perceptions of accountability and led to improved relations between local police and community members. The participants in this study were drawn from government and non-government providers servicing the Macquarie Fields area. In addition, police managers and street police attached to the Macquarie Fields patrol were recruited for this project.

In terms of the relationship between Macquarie Fields police and the local community, results obtained were recorded under six themes. These were: (i) Managers’ approach to community policing, (ii) relations between Macquarie Fields Police and their local community, (iii) notions held by street police as to what constitutes effective police accountability, (iv) understandings of street police as to what makes up a police-community partnership, (v) tactics employed by police to drive down the local crime rate, (vi) community interactions predominantly involving younger inexperienced police.

The results indicated that, despite ostensible commitments by police management at Macquarie Fields to forge closer partnerships and be more accountable to the local
community, a problematic relationship existed between police and community members. Furthermore, results indicated that street police held problematic notions concerning their accountability to and partnership with the local community. This adversely impacted upon the way in which police interacted with community members with whom they came in contact. This was particularly evident during ‘stop, search and move on’ strategies which were conducted in a confrontational manner, predominantly upon local youths socialising in groups in public places. Findings from this study also indicated that young inexperienced police tended to approach their interactions with local residents and, in particular local youth, in an adversarial manner.

Moreover, these poor police-community relationships, and subsequent confrontational interactions between police and community members appeared to have been influenced by negative police attitudes towards the local community. These negative attitudes were shaped by the problematic work environment at Macquarie Fields. During the course of their daily duties, police came in contact and interacted on a more frequent basis with a small percentage of the Macquarie Fields community, namely youths residing within the Department of Housing estates. These interactions were adversarial in nature, with police reporting being subjected to verbal and physical abuse. Furthermore, police interactions with other community members appeared only to occur if the individual was a victim of, or witnessed a crime. In addition to constantly experiencing negative interactions, police perceived large lifestyle and moral differences between themselves and those community members with whom they came in contact. Police subsequently tended to negatively stereotype the Macquarie Fields community based upon these interactions.
Arising from the aforementioned findings of this study a number of recommendations were made in terms of implications for policy, practice and research. These included the need for the negative impact of the Macquarie Fields community upon police attitudes to be recognised by police management. Suggestions to best address this issue which included the capturing of data concerning police perceptions of their role were discussed. Furthermore, strategies were canvassed to address the ‘crime fighting’ mindset of Macquarie Fields police. These involved a service-oriented approach being encouraged by police management; inexperienced officers being paired up with experienced police; greater weight being placed upon problem oriented policing tactics; greater involvement of community in reduction of crime; social skills training being delivered to school children and the empowerment of the local community through regeneration.

Also examined were implications for police training. This focused upon ways to support police in the performance of their duties whilst improving police-community relations at Macquarie Fields. Strategies canvassed consisted of police being given training to aid in their understanding of perceived lifestyle and social differences. Also discussed was training to be delivered to inexperienced police to assist them communicate more effectively with youth. The incorporation of community policing into recruit training was also explored as was the delivering of in-service courses to police involving de-escalation techniques and conflict management. In addition, increasing the number of policewomen performing duties was explored as was the greater involvement of youth in police-community meetings.
Limitations of the research

This research has a number of limitations. As a qualitative study, the results are not necessarily generalisable to other patrols or communities even though the findings may have some resonance. There were issues, too, with sampling. From a total of thirty police participants twenty officers were not performing duties at Macquarie Fields at the time of the 2005 riots. Also, in terms of the quality of the observational data, there was possible bias in the manner in which observational notes were recorded due to my previous employment as a police officer for twenty years. I may have unintentionally recorded selected information during my observations of the police participants due to biases regarding the policing of disadvantaged communities. Another possible limitation in terms of the observation data was that my presence during police-community interactions may have influenced the manner in which police participants behaved. It is possible that the police I observed acted in a certain way so as to create a favourable impression upon me. It may have also been the case that participants were influenced by ‘social desirability’ and their answers to my questions may have been constructed in order to please me.

Another possible limitation is that my expectations and my structuring of the interview questions may have influenced the answers provided by the participants. These aforementioned issues have been addressed in Chapter 3 (pp 127 to 130). Furthermore, two additional limitations were identified. These relate to sampling and workplace place environment.
Research sample

This study was undertaken within the ethical requirement that participants’ involvement was voluntary. Purposive sampling was initially used to seek voluntary participation of respondents from those Government and non-government agencies serving Macquarie Fields whose executive members provided written submissions, and/or deposed evidence, before the New South Wales Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues following the 2005 riots. Participants were also gathered through snowball sampling. It is possible that those who volunteered possessed particular characteristics, such as an unfavourable bias against Macquarie Fields Police.

However, the sample of community service respondents gathered from Government and non-government agencies demonstrated well developed knowledge of the social and policing issues impacting upon community members who were coming in contact with Macquarie Fields Police. In addition, a central purpose of this study was to discover the relationship between local police and the community members with whom they came in contact. Community service respondents participating in this study demonstrated a good knowledge of, and provided rich information concerning, the relationship between police and these community members, as well as constructive suggestions concerning initiatives to improve relations between police and those community members with whom they interact.

In terms of the police participants gathered for this study, thirty Macquarie Fields police volunteered to be interviewed and observed performing duties. Similar to the community service respondents and the ethically required voluntary nature of their participation, a potential limitation was that police respondents may have possessed
unfavourable bias towards the Macquarie Fields community. This may have been the case with some respondents, but the data contained sufficient surprises to indicate there were variations in responses and opinions amongst police.

Role of police management in the facilitation of accountability and community policing initiatives

This research explored the views and initiatives of Macquarie Fields police management concerning community policing strategies, in an attempt to forge partnerships, improve relations and be more accountable to the Macquarie Fields community. Although findings suggest that Macquarie Fields police management have predominantly left community policing activities to be undertaken by management staff and members of the Crime Management Unit, this research failed to gather significant data concerning the specific attempts undertaken by police management to facilitate the transfer of community policing philosophies to the attitudes and day to day practices of street police.

This is a potential limitation of this study, as findings suggest that street police failed to internalise and practice the philosophy of community policing. It is noted that this is consistent with the findings of research undertaken by Lord and Friday (2008) who found that, “…although officers can understand the principles of COP, difficulties can arise in implementation and acceptance of administrative changes” (Lord & Friday, 2008, p.236). In terms of this present study, this limitation could be addressed by future research employing a case study approach. In this way interview and observational data could capture the attempts of police management to facilitate
community policing initiatives and philosophies into the day to day practices of street police and possibly identify impediments to the success of such attempts.

**Contribution of the research**

This study contributes to knowledge concerning contributing factors to the poor police-community relationship at Macquarie Fields. It builds upon research reported by Lee (2006) which found Macquarie Field’s residents leading up to the 2005 riots were dissatisfied with inconsistent policing practices, and research conducted by Weatherburn (2006) that, prior to the riots, “anger, resentment and frustration” (Weatherburn, 2006, p.23) existed within the local community towards local police. This research has found that, during the data collection period from 2007 to 2008, despite attempts by Macquarie Fields police management to enhance the relationship between police and the local community, a poor relationship still existed between police and the community members with whom they came in contact. In particular, this study discovered that although police management at Macquarie Fields implemented a number of strategies such as police involvement in youth camps, community meetings and a customer service approach to increase accountability and form closer partnerships with the community these were mainly confined to the roles of police within the station’s Crime Management Unit and the police managers and, subsequently, did not appear to have any impact upon the street-level practice of police.

Although Lee (2006); Owen, (2006) & Weatherburn, (2006) identified that, prior to the 2005 riots, there had been community dissatisfaction with police practices, they failed to seek the views of police concerning their working environment and the community members with whom they came in contact. This study contributes to knowledge
regarding the negative impact of the problematic work environment at Macquarie Fields upon police attitudes and the manner in which they conduct their duties. It has identified that police are constantly interacting with a small percentage of the community, namely youths living in the Department of Housing estates, and this has led to police negatively stereotyping the community. These negative interactions combined with police perceptions of ‘otherness’ has adversely impacted upon police perceptions of accountability and partnership. This, combined with an operational focus to reduce local crime, has adversely impacted upon the manner in which police interact with community members, especially during crime reduction strategies such as ‘move on’ procedures. This study has further identified that, within the Macquarie fields policing context, younger inexperienced police experience the greatest difficulty in their interactions with community members, especially local youth on the Department of Housing estates.

Another practical implication of this study is the inadequacy of police training in preparing police for the problematic work environment at Macquarie Fields. This is especially relevant in terms of the younger inexperienced police commencing employment at Macquarie Fields and their adversarial interactions with community members. However, it is also relevant in terms of experienced police, as some experienced officers, following their transfer to Macquarie Fields from another policing patrol, experienced shock. This related to the differences in levels of respect and lifestyle of community members with whom they came in contact.

Although it is not the intention of this study to generalise findings to other police patrols, Marshall and Rossman (2006) consider that findings arising from a qualitative
study may be transferable to similar situations. Consequently, it is argued that this present study’s findings may be transferable to policing other disadvantaged communities, where problematic interactions exist between police and community members. In particular, the transferability of findings may be of relevance in terms of the adverse impact of a problematic work environment and perceptions of otherness upon police notions of accountability and partnership which may thwart community policing initiatives.

Implications for future research

This present study through a case study approach has focused upon policing at Macquarie Fields, and the findings have implications for future research. There would appear to be a gap in research pertaining to socially disorganised communities and their possible influence upon police perceptions of accountability. Whilst the literature reviewed suggests a possible causal relationship between social disorganisation and police misconduct, the associated research fails to address the impact which such communities may have upon police perceptions of accountability. In particular, there would appear to be a gap in literature concerning whether police perceptions of accountability are influenced by the type of community in which they serve and, if this probably exists, whether the standard of police service fluctuates.

For instance research which examined the possible relationship between socially disorganised communities and police misconduct relied upon observational data and failed to conduct interviews with police (Alpert et al., 2004; Kane, 2002; Klinger, 1997; Mastrofski et al., 2002; Smith, 1986; Smith et al., 1991). It is suggested that, whilst this research provided evidence of police misconduct, it failed to glean from
police their perceptions of the levels of their accountability whilst working within those socially disorganised communities, and whether this would change if those police performed duties in a community whose residents enjoyed a higher economic status. It is also noted that, whilst Terrill and Reisig’s (2003) study into increased levels of police force in disadvantaged areas did include interviews with police, it did not canvass police perceptions of the levels of their accountability in those disadvantaged areas. In fact Terrill and Reisig (2003) suggested that future research, “…should continue to examine the role of neighbourhood context on police use of force. Such an effort might begin with a better understanding of officers’ views toward neighbourhoods and how such views may prompt their decision making behaviour” (Terrill & Reisig, 2003, p.309).

It is suggested that addressing this gap in the literature could be significant in terms of the commitment of Australian police organisations to be more accountable to local communities.

Summary

My interest in this Macquarie Fields case study arose from a number of factors. These included the 2005 riots at Macquarie Fields, reports of community dissatisfaction with police following the riots, my own policing background and my professional involvement in the education of police recruits and continuing education of serving officers. The findings from this study highlight that policing a community such as Macquarie Fields, and, perhaps indeed, any community is not undertaken in a robotic fashion by officers but rather their attitudes and interactions with community members are shaped by and shape the work environment. Although the community rightly
expects a high level of accountability and professionalism from police, they are still human and can experience discomfort, fear and a sense of ‘otherness’ whilst working within a problematic work environment.

Although training can instil in police the need to remain professional and get the job done, it can not direct an officer to possess a sense of belonging to a community. Flowing from this, police training needs to recognise and pay attention to the issue that police attitudes and behaviour are shaped by their daily experiences with community members. In terms of Macquarie Fields, I do not assert the issue is one of police behaving illegally, but consider that the discourteous manner in which they conduct themselves during interactions, especially during ‘move on’ procedures conducted upon youths socialising in public spaces, has damaged the police-community relationship at Macquarie Fields. The solution does not lie in punishing police, as findings suggest they have been successful in their crime fighting efforts. Rather officers, through their positive daily interactions with community members which are guided by an understanding of the adverse impact of social disadvantage upon people’s lives, need to be encouraged and rewarded.

Finally, there needs to be greater recognition and attention required from the NSWP concerning the detrimental impact upon police attitudes of performing duties in patrols, such as Macquarie Fields, where tensions exist between police and community members.
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Appendix 1: List of government/non-government agencies that provided evidence to the Standing Committee on Social Issues

- AFL NSW/ACT
- Airds Bradbury Community Centre
- Airds Bradbury Neighbourhood Centre
- Allawah House
- Campbelltown City Council
- Campbelltown Youth Centre
- Campbelltown Youth Service Inc
- Centre for Drug & Alcohol & Mental Health, NSW Health
- Community Centres Program
- Council of Social Services of NSW
- Department of Community Services
- Department of Education and Training
- Department of Housing
- Glenquarie Neighbourhood Centre
- Guise Public School
- Ingleburn Uniting Church Council
- James Meehan High School
- Macarthur Community Forum
- Macarthur Greens
- Macarthur Health Service, Sydney South West Area Health Service
- Macarthur Youth Commitment Inc
- Macquarie Fields Women’s Action Group
- Mission Australia
- Northern Campbelltown Community Action Group (NAB) Inc
- NSW Police
- Police Association of New South Wales
- Premier’s Department
- Primary Connect
- Schools as Communities
- St Vincent de Paul Society
- Sydney South West Area Health Service, NSW Health
- The Cabinet Office New South Wales
- The Junctions Works Inc
- The Salvation Army
- UnitingCare Burnside
- Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Australia
- Work Ventures
6 December 2010

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**Griffith University Human Research Ethics Application – CCJ/08/07/HREC**

This is to confirm that Human Research Ethics Application CCJ/08/07/HREC titled “Have community policing initiatives changed police perceptions of accountability in Macquarie Fields and have they led to better police-community relations?” conducted by Ken Wooden, Timothy Prenzler and Janet Ransley was approved by the Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) on 07 August 2007. The authorisation for this research was issued from 01 September 2007 to 31 December 2008.

The HREC is constituted and operates in accordance with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007).

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries about this matter.

Regards

[Signature]

Gary Allen
Senior Manager, Research Ethics and Integrity
Office for Research
Appendix 3: Research approval letter from NSWP

Mr Ken Wooden
School of Policing Studies
Charles Sturt University
NSW Police College
McDermott Dr
GOULBURN 2580

Wednesday, 18 June 2008

Dear Mr Wooden

Research Application – Police – Community Relations in Macquarie Fields

I am pleased to inform you that, following consultation with the Commander, Macquarie Fields, your application to undertake PhD research on Police – Community relations in Macquarie Fields has been approved.

This approval is contingent on the following conditions:

- That you adhere to ethical research practice as set out in your Ethics Committee application and approval, in particular maintaining the confidentiality of any information collected and the anonymity of NSW Police staff, and respecting the principles of informed consent for all participants.

- In the course of your research you may be exposed to information that falls outside your research topic and is not generally available to the public. You are to maintain the strictest confidentiality in regards to any such information. If you have any questions about the relevance of any such information to your approved research program, please address them to me or to your local contact for clarification.

- When accompanying a crew during the observational phase of your research, you are not to interact with members of the public in any way, other than to explain, if asked, that you are a researcher observing the police. You should carry a photo ID showing your status as an employee of Charles Sturt University, and a short written participant information statement outlining your research and guaranteeing the anonymity of any persons present during your observations.

- While attending police premises or conducting observational research, at all times you are to strictly comply with any instructions issued by the crew you are accompanying, or by their supervisors, duty officers or commander.

Leadership Development Directorate
Building E NSW Police College McDermott Drive Goulburn NSW 2580
Tel 48 232 530 Fax 48 232 792 TTY 9211 5776 (Hearing/Speech Impaired) ENet 82530 EFax 82792
While being conveyed in police vehicles you will be subject to the same procedures as students on observational placements. You are not to be conveyed on urgent duties under any circumstances, and should be ready at all times to exit the vehicle at short notice. You should carry a mobile phone and sufficient funds to call a taxi back to the Macquarie Fields station, and any costs arising from such circumstances will be your own responsibility.

Any data you collect is to be used only for your PhD program and associated academic activities, and is not to be released to any person or used for any other purpose with out express written permission.

In due course the NSW Police Force will require, as a condition of the grant of this approval, receipt of a final version of your PhD Thesis with an executive summary, along with your agreement that we are able to place the thesis in the NSW Police library, and use the information therein as we see fit, but, of course, with due respect to your moral rights as author. While the NSW Police will be happy to receive recommendations, we remind you that we are under no obligation to implement them.

Since you are a staff member of Charles Sturt University, this research has been facilitated under Contract 0400641 Collaborative arrangement for the delivery of the educational component of the CEP for NSW Police, 2006-2016. If you cease being an employee of Charles Sturt University prior to the conclusion of your research, you will need to seek a new approval.

You note that breaches of these conditions may lead to consultation with the CSU Head of School Policing Studies and withdrawal of this approval.

Please contact me if there is anything else that I can do to assist with your research project.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Dr Chris Devery
Principal Research Officer.

cc A/Professor Rosemary Woolston, School of Policing Studies, Charles Sturt University.
Appendix 4: Information Sheet for Community Service Participants

Research project into the perceptions of accountability of Macquarie Field’s police officers.

Participant Information Sheet

Chief Investigators: A/Prof Tim Prenzler
School of Criminology and Criminal Justice,
Griffith University,
Brisbane, Queensland 4111
Telephone number (07) 3875 5613

Dr Janet Ransley
School of Criminology and Criminal Justice,
Griffith University,
Brisbane, Queensland 4111
Telephone number (07) 3875 5613

Background
You are invited to take part in a research study to examine the perceptions of accountability of police attached to the Macquarie Fields Patrol. Its aim is to examine whether community-policing initiatives implemented since the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots have changed police perceptions of accountability and whether this has subsequently led to improved relations between local police and community members. It will examine through interviews and observations the interactions of local police towards their community members with a particular focus upon police perceptions of accountability prior to and after the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots.

What participation in this study involves
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in an interview, which comprises of semi-structured questions. These interviews would take forty-five minutes to one hour and be audio taped. They would be arranged at a time to suit you and in a comfortable venue nominated by you.
Consent to participate
Participation in this study is voluntary and refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled. If you agree to participate, you can withdraw at any time. You can request to erase all or any part of the audiotape during the interviews if you so wish.

Risk
Participation in this research poses no risks, as the research will be asking you questions about community policing initiatives and local community members’ experiences and perceptions of general police practices and policies.

Confidentiality
Anonymity and confidentiality would be maintained and there would be no identification of you in any reporting. All information obtained from the interviews and audiotapes will be treated in strict confidence, stored in a locked filing cabinet, away from the Macquarie Fields Patrol and accessed only by the researcher or my supervisor. Once the audiotapes have been transcribed/analysed they will be erased by the researcher. Feedback in the form of a generalized summary and overall outcome of the study will be offered to all participants.

The present research is being conducted by Kenneth Ronald Wooden, PhD Candidate to meet the requirements of Doctor of Philosophy through Griffith University, Criminology and Criminal Justice School. The data collected will be included in my doctoral thesis.

If you agree to participate in the present study, please complete the attached Consent Form. The Consent Form consists of two copies, one to keep for yourself and one for the primary researcher’s records. If you require further information, please contact me, Ken Wooden by email kwooden@csu.edu.au or telephone (02) 4823 2968.

Any person with concern or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Manager, Research Ethics, Office for Research, Bray Centre, Nathan Campus Griffith University, Kessels Road, Nathan, Qld 4111, telephone (07) 3735 5585 or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au.

Privacy statement
The conduct of this research involves the collection, access and/or use of your identified personal information. The information collected is confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties without your consent, except to meet government, legal or other regulatory authority requirements. A de-identified copy of this data may be used for other research purposes. However, your anonymity will at all times be safeguarded. For further information consult the University’s Privacy Plan at www.griffith.edu.au/im/aa/vc/pp or telephone (07) 3735 5585.

Thank you for your assistance with this research project.
Appendix 5: Information sheet for police participants

Research project into the perceptions of accountability of Macquarie Field’s police officers.

Participant Information Sheet

Chief Investigators: A/Prof Tim Prendergast
School of Criminology and Criminal Justice,
Griffith University,
Brisbane, Queensland 4111
Telephone number (07) 3875 5613

Dr Janet Ransley
School of Criminology and Criminal Justice,
Griffith University,
Brisbane, Queensland 4111
Telephone number (07) 3875 5613

Background
You are invited to take part in a research study to examine the perceptions of accountability of police attached to the Macquarie Fields Patrol. Its aim is to examine whether community-policing initiatives implemented since the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots have changed police perceptions of accountability and whether this has subsequently led to improved relations between local police and community members. It will examine through interviews and observations the interactions of local police towards their community members with a particular focus upon police perceptions of accountability prior to and after the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots.

What participation in this study involves
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in an interview, which comprises of semi-structured questions. These interviews would take forty-five minutes to one hour and be audio taped. They would be arranged at a time to suit you and in a comfortable venue nominated by you. If you agree to participate in this study you will also be asked permission to be accompanied whilst performing your policing duties and observations conducted and notes made concerning your interactions with local community members.
Consent to participate
Participation in this study is voluntary and refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled. If you agree to participate, you can withdraw at any time. You can request to erase all or any part of the audiotape during the interviews if you so wish.

Risk
This research will be asking you questions and making observations about general practices and policies with no questions being asked about potential illegalities. However it should be noted that even though the researcher is not a serving police officer and reporting of unethical conduct is not mandatory the researcher still has the same obligations as other members of the public to disclose any police illegal / unethical conduct which may be observed.

Confidentiality
Anonymity and confidentiality would be maintained and there would be no identification of you in any reporting. All information obtained from the interviews and audiotapes will be treated in strict confidence, stored in a locked filing cabinet, away from the Macquarie Fielde Patrol and accessed only by the researcher or my supervisor. Once the audiotapes have been transcribed/analysed they will be erased by the researcher. Feedback in the form of a generalized summary and overall outcome of the study will be offered to all participants.

The present research is being conducted by Kenneth Ronald Wooden, PhD Candidate to meet the requirements of Doctor of Philosophy through Griffith University, Criminology and Criminal Justice School. The data collected will be included in my doctoral thesis.

If you agree to participate in the present study, please complete the attached Consent Form. The Consent Form consists of two copies, one to keep for yourself and one for the primary researcher’s records. If you require further information, please contact me, Ken Wooden by email kwooden@csu.edu.au or telephone (02) 4823 2968.

Any person with concern or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Manager, Research Ethics, Office for Research, Bray Centre, Nathan Campus Griffith University, Kessels Road, Nathan, Qld 4111, telephone (07) 3735 5585 or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au.

Privacy statement
The conduct of this research involves the collection, access and/or use of your identified personal information. The information collected is confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties without your consent, except to meet government, legal or other regulatory authority requirements. A de-identified copy of this data may be used for other research purposes. However, your anonymity will at all times be safeguarded. For further information consult the University’s Privacy Plan at www.griffith.edu.au/oa/oa/vw/pn or telephone (07) 3735 5585.

Thank you for your assistance with this research project.
Appendix 6: Informed consent statement
Research project into the perceptions of accountability of Macquarie Field’s police officers.

Chief Investigators: A/Prof Tim Prenzler
School of Criminology and Criminal Justice,
Griffith University,
Brisbane, Queensland 4111
Telephone number (07) 3875 5613

Dr Janet Ransley
School of Criminology and Criminal Justice,
Griffith University,
Brisbane, Queensland 4111
Telephone number (07) 3875 5613

This present research is being conducted by Kenneth Ronald Wooden, PhD Candidate to meet the requirements of Doctor of Philosophy through Griffith University, Criminology and Criminal Justice School.

I, ____________________________ (Please write Name) have read (or have had read to me) and understand the information sheets attached to this form above, and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research, knowing that I can withdraw at any time. I have been given a copy of this form to keep.

Participant’s Name: ____________________________ (block letters)

Participant’s Signature: ____________________________

Date: ____________________________

Assistant Investigator’s Name: Ken Ronald Wooden (Block letters)

Assistant Investigator’s Signature: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________

Any person with concern or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Manager, Research Ethics, Office for Research, Bray Centre, Nathan Campus Griffith University, Kessels Road, Nathan, Qld 4111, telephone (07) 3735 5585 or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au.
Appendix 7: Demographic questions community service participants

Demographic profile of community service participants:

Male:

Female:

Government Organisation:

Non-Government Organisation:

Length of service (years):

0-2
3-5
6-10
11-15
16-20
21-30
Appendix 8: Demographic questions police participants

Demographic profile of police participants:

Male:
Female:

Age:
20-29
30-39
40-49
50+

Years of police service:
0-2
3-5
6-10
11-15
16-20
21-30

Years of police service at Macquarie Fields:
0-2
3-5
6-10
11-15
16-20
21-30
Appendix 9: Interview schedule for community service participants

Interviews to be conducted with executive members from Government and non-government agencies

Background questions

Have you or anyone in your organisation had dealings with community members who have had contact with the local police?

If the participant indicates they have not had personal contact with such a local community member I will ask them if they could provide me with the name of a colleague whom may have.

If the participant is unable to supply a name I will thank them for their time and explain to them that for the purpose of this research I am interested to discover participant’s experiences of local residents whom have had contact with Macquarie Fields Police.

If participant indicates they have had personal contact with such community members I will proceed to the following questions.

Can you tell me where that person’s contact with the police took place?

Can you tell me when approximately the contact took place?

What was their contact with the police about?

What did the police do during that contact?

Core components for successful community policing and the experiences of local community members with police.


Theory: A core component of community policing is problem solving with the assistance of neighbourhood input (Trojanowicz, Woodes, Harpold et al, 1994, Mastrofski, Worden and Snipes, 1995, Fielding, 2005 & De Vries and Van Der Hooft – Van Der Zijl, 2000).

Did the person you know indicate their feelings about the way they were treated by police during their contact? If ‘Yes’ what were they?

Did they convey their thoughts to you regarding whether they felt listened to by the police? If ‘Yes’; what were they?
What were their views as to whether police treated them as equals?

Can you tell me any thoughts they may have expressed about the job police are doing in working with residents to solve local problems?

**Theory: Successful community policing requires mutual respect, civility and support between police and local community members (Trojanowicz, Woods, Harpold et al, 1994).**

Do you consider the person you know typical of people in the local community?

(If the answer is ‘Yes’; What do you think makes them typical?)
(If the answer is ‘No’; What do you think the differences are?)

Can you tell me the opinions of the individual regarding the level of respect that local police have for them?

What feelings do they have when they come in contact with local police?

**Theory: Successful community policing requires that police are seen as legitimate by their local community (Ponsaers, 2001 & Reiner, 1992).**

Has the local resident you know mentioned their views concerning the presence of police in their neighbourhood? (If the answer is ‘Yes’; What were their views?)

**Theory: For community policing to effectively function it requires an exchange of information between police and their community (Mastrofski, 1995 & Trojanowicz and Buequroux, 1990).**

Can you tell me if the local resident indicated whether police had sought their views concerning local crime problems?

(If the answer is ‘Yes’; Can you tell me what information the resident said they sought?)

Do you know if the resident ever on their own initiative provided police with information concerning local crime problems?

(If the answer is ‘Yes’; Can you tell me what the information was about?)
(If the answer is ‘No’; Did the person tell you their reasons for not providing police with such information?)
Theory: Community members will not support police in solving crimes if they perceive that police are disinterested or not fulfilling their policing role (Kubrin and Weitzer, 2003).

Theory: If individuals consider that police have treated them in a fair and respectful manner they are more likely to be satisfied with their police contact (Brandl and Horvath, 1991 & Seed, 2004).

Did the person you know tell you their views concerning the level of help victims receive from local police?

(If the answer is ‘Yes’; Can you tell me their views?)

Theory: That police misconduct and disrespect directed towards a community member diminishes an individual’s support to the police (Jefferson, 1991).

What did the resident tell you about the behaviour of police in their neighbourhood?

Theory: If police demonstrate empathy and a willingness to assist individuals, this significantly contributes to the facilitation of community policing initiatives. (Lasley, Vernon and Dery, 1995).

Can you tell me the opinions of the resident in terms of police understanding their situations/problems?

Questions for executive members regarding their views/experiences of Macquarie Fields Police and community policing initiatives

How long have you been working for this organisation?

Can you tell me your thoughts on the behaviour/conduct of local police towards members of the community?

Thinking back to the beginning of 2005 can you recall the relationship which police had with the local community?

What were your views of police perceptions of accountability around this time?

Thinking back now from 2006 to present date have you noticed any differences in police conduct/behaviour?

Are you aware of any community policing initiatives introduced since 2006 by the local police?

Do you think police-community relations have improved since 2006?
(If the answer is 'Yes'; (i) In what ways have police-community relations improved?
(ii) Can you attribute anything as causing these improved relations?)

Do you feel there has been an improvement in police perceptions of accountability since the beginning of 2006?

(If the answer is 'Yes'; could you tell me why you think this?)
(If the answer is 'No'; could you tell me why you think this?)
Appendix 10: Interview schedule for police participants

Interview schedule:
Questions for interviews with police participants

Background questions

How long have you been working in this patrol?

Do you enjoy working in this area?

(If the answer is ‘No’; Why don’t you enjoy it?)
(If the answer is ‘Yes’; Can you tell me what you like about it?)

What are the main types of jobs you go to here?

What are your views about these jobs?

Core components required for successful community policing compared against the opinions of local police concerning their policing role and local community members.

Theory: For community policing to be successful citizens must be regarded as full fledged partners by the police (Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux, 1994; Macintyre and Prenzler, 1997, Ponsaers, 2001 & Hawdon and Ryan, 2003).

Theory: A core component of community policing is problem solving with the assistance of neighbourhood input (Trojanowicz, Woodes, Harpold et al, 1994, Mastrofski, Worden and Snipes, 1995, Fielding, 2005 & De Vries and Van Der Hooft – Van Der Zijl, 2000).

I’m interested to know what your thoughts are about the local residents, do you see them as partners in fighting crime?

Theory: Successful community policing requires mutual respect, civility and support between police and local community members (Trojanowicz, Woods, Harpold et al, 1994).

Can you tell me what you think about the level of respect shown to yourself and other police by the local residents?
Theory: Community members will not support police in solving crimes if they perceive that police are disinterested or not fulfilling their policing role (Kubrin and Weitzer, 2003).

Can you describe the level of interest you have when you attend various jobs in this area?

Theory: If police demonstrate empathy and a willingness to assist individuals, this significantly contributes to the facilitation of community policing initiatives (Lasley, Vernon and Dery, 1995).

What do you think about the victims of crime in this community, do they all deserve your help?

Local police and their views of suspects

Theory: Suspects approached by police in lower status neighbourhoods have a greater likelihood of being arrested than suspects in a higher status neighbourhood (Smith, 1986).

Theory: Police are more likely to use increased levels of force with suspects in neighbourhoods suffering from disadvantage (Terrill and Reisig, 2003).

Theory: When suspects appeared to police as possessing less authority, police tend to resort to greater force as compared to suspects of a higher perceived status (Alpert, Dunham & MacDonald, 2004).

I’m interested to know your experiences and thoughts in dealing with suspects. What do you think about people who are suspected of committing crimes in your patrol?

Do you feel these people should be treated in the same way as other members in the community? (If the answer is ‘No’; Can you tell me why you think they should be treated differently?)

Impact of lower status neighbourhoods upon police behaviour

Theory: Police are less vigorous in attending to complaints of non violent minor crime in low status neighbourhoods when compared to similar crime being reported in higher status areas (Stark, 1987 & Klinger, 1997).

Theory: Individuals residing in neighbourhoods suffering from social disadvantage experience greater police disrespect (Mastrofski, Reisig and McCluskey, 2002).

Theory: Individuals residing in neighbourhoods suffering from social disadvantage suffer from higher rates of police misconduct (Kane, 2002 & Mastrofski, Reisig and McCluskey, 2002).
Theory: That the physical characteristics of disadvantaged neighbourhoods such as graffiti, the poor condition of properties and the overall poverty of the location can impact upon police perceptions of increased deviance (Stark, 1987 & Herbert, 1997).

Theory: Police performing duties in neighbourhoods afflicted by poverty and high levels of crime perceive greater citizen disrespect (Smith, Graham and Adams, 1991).

I’m interested in your thoughts concerning the general community here at Macquarie Fields and whether you feel they appreciate the work your doing?

Can you tell me your opinion about type of people you come in contact with in this community?

Thinking about the typical person you come into contact with here do you feel there is a difference between them and you?  
(If the answer is ‘Yes’; Can you describe the differences to me?)  
(If the answer is ‘No’; What do think the similarities are?)  

Can you recall an incident when you considered there was a distance between yourself and the member of the public you were dealing with?

What are your thoughts as to whether all the local people you come in contact with should be treated the same?

Theory: Police accountability consists of different types of accountability being, personal accountability, legal accountability, community accountability and administrative accountability (Miller, Blackler and Alexandra, 2006 & Miller and Blackler, 2005).

Theory: Police are accountable to themselves, the police culture, the organisation, the community and the State (Findlay, 2004).

As a police officer who do you consider yourself accountable to?

If the participant mentions ‘the community’ ask, Why do you consider yourself accountable to the community?

If the participant does not mention ‘community’ in their answer ask, Can you tell me your opinion about police being accountable to this local community?

Is there any person or group of people in this community whom you consider yourself not accountable to?
Theory: Citizens have a right to express dissatisfaction with the police and receive a proper hearing of their complaint (Walker, 2005).

What is your opinion as to whether the same attention should be given to all community members here whom make complaints concerning police?
Appendix 11: Information sheet for Macquarie fields residents

Research project into the perceptions of accountability of Macquarie Field’s police officers.

Information Sheet

Chief Investigators: A/Prof Tim Prensler
School of Criminology and Criminal Justice,
Griffith University,
Brisbane, Queensland 4111
Telephone number (07) 3875 5613

Dr Janet Ramsley
School of Criminology and Criminal Justice,
Griffith University,
Brisbane, Queensland 4111
Telephone number (07) 3875 5613

My name is Ken Wooden and I am a PhD student conducting research through the School of Criminology and Justice Studies at Griffith University. The nature of my research study is to examine the perceptions of accountability of police attached to the Macquarie Fields Patrol. Its aim is to examine whether community-policing initiatives implemented since the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots have changed police perceptions of accountability and whether this has subsequently led to improved relations between local police and community members. It will examine through interviews and observations the interactions of local police towards their community members with a particular focus upon police perceptions of accountability prior to and after the 2005 Macquarie Fields riots. It is not the purpose of my research to observe members of the public.

I have received ethics clearance through Griffith University which guarantees that no one will be identified during the course of my research.

Ken Wooden
PhD student
Griffith University
## Appendix 12: Nodes

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